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## DIPLOMACY AND PEACE



# DIPLOMACY AND PEACE

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## PREFACE

MR. NICOLSON, in the last of his three admirable diplomatic studies, has declared that the old and new diplomacy are now equally discredited.<sup>1</sup> The old diplomatists who alone were responsible for negotiation before the World War were civil servants, professional, expert. Since the World War they have been supplemented and sometimes completely superseded by statesmen or politicians, not trained to diplomacy, who undertake both the framing of policy and the negotiating of agreements upon policy. This is the "new" diplomacy by conference, which Mr. Nicolson calls "perhaps the most unfortunate diplomatic method ever conceived."

I am not so sure about the discrediting of the professional diplomatists since the World War. They have made no conspicuous failures. When employed upon any particular questions, they have generally, I believe, arrived at some solution. It is diplomacy by conference which is discredited because of the amazing and tragic futility which it displayed at the World Economic Conference of 1933, and the Disarmament Conference of 1932-5.

The reasons for this futility are many and obscure; but one of them can be observed. It is that policy and negotiation, which are best kept apart, have been combined in the same hands. It is the business of statesmen, of responsible ministers of state, to frame policy. The business of diplomacy is to negotiate written agreements. Mr. Nicolson is of opinion, and with reason, that while the statesmen should decide policy, subject to the knowledge and control of their Parliaments or people, the technical work of negotiating agreements

<sup>1</sup> Curzon, *The Last Phase* (1934), p. 40.

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embodying policy should be left to professional diplomatists working away from the public eye. This is not "secret" diplomacy, which means binding the peoples to agreements without their knowledge. No agreements should become valid without parliamentary ratification and publication; but the experience of the last fifteen years has shown that the negotiation of the agreement is best done in private. This method does not stir up bad blood. And if professional diplomatists are employed in the negotiation they will be certain to arrive at some sort of agreement, and any agreement is sure to be better than none.

The statesmen and diplomatists have not made a conspicuous success of all their work in the last twenty years, but this is no reason for ignoring them. Their work has had to be performed in exceptionally difficult circumstances for which they themselves are only partially responsible. It is now recognized that the domestic and foreign affairs of every state are intimately connected. As the tasks of statesmanship and diplomacy become more and more responsible, the need for proper training becomes more obvious. Democracy, notwithstanding all criticisms of it, does at any rate provide a school of statesmanship, though the late age of entry into contemporary politics makes the school less effective than it was in the early nineteenth century. Diplomatists have usually a more organized kind of training. It has been suggested that in addition to their preliminary training, which may be at the university, *École politique des hautes études*, or other school, there should be a "staff college" for senior officials.<sup>1</sup> It is a curious fact that while every great state has splendidly equipped staff colleges for the fighting services, there are none for the services of peace. There should be

<sup>1</sup> H. Nicolson, *ibid.*, p. 407.

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a staff college for diplomatists, into which younger members would pass after rigorous examination or investigation, and through which they should graduate to the higher ranks. If one state established such a college, the other states would sooner or later do so too.

Science has no frontiers. In spite of propagandist tendencies, instruction in politics, history, international law, and other subjects at one college might be expected to approximate to the instruction in other staff colleges. And so these schools would not only raise the level of diplomatists' equipment, but would promote the solidarity of the profession. Politicians, too, might aspire to the diplomatists' staff college and graduate through it, though graduation could scarcely be made an essential condition before election to Parliament or into Cabinet office.



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## CHAPTER I

### THE DIVIDING LINE OF THE WORLD WAR

THE preponderance of Europe in the world—viewed as a whole, a beneficent preponderance—was the result of the material resources, the physical energy, the intellectual and spiritual productiveness, upon which the unchallenged prestige of the European peoples was based. When in 1914 the peoples of Europe turned from co-operation, however imperfect, to mutual destruction, their prestige was ruined. The world would no longer believe in European superiority; and the European peoples no longer believed in themselves. Yet the world was bound to go on; and if Europe had forfeited its position of leadership, a new system would have to be made.

President Wilson, one of the greatest of men in an age when great men were few, saw the ruin of the European "system," the suicide of Europe in the World War. When in 1917 a consideration of the interest of the United States, and the interest of the world, induced him to intervene actively in the War, he had no intention of seeing the old system restored at the end. There must be an end to the international anarchy and the international intrigue which had produced the World War. He declared to Congress on January 8, 1918:

We entered this war because violations of right had occurred which touched us to the quick and made the life of our own people

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impossible unless they were corrected and the world secured once for all against their recurrence. What we demand in this war, therefore, is nothing peculiar to ourselves. It is that the world be made fit and safe to live in; and particularly that it be made safe for every peace-loving nation which, like our own, wishes to live its own life, determine its own institutions, be assured of justice and fair dealings by other peoples of the world, as against force and selfish aggression. All of the peoples of the world are in effect partners in this interest and for our own part we see very clearly that unless justice be done to others it will not be done to us.

The programme of the world peace, therefore, is our programme, and that programme, the only possible programme, as we see it, is this:

✓ Open covenants of peace must be arrived at, after which there will surely be no private international action or rulings of any kind, but diplomacy shall proceed always frankly and in the public view....

A general association of nations must be formed under specific covenants for the purpose of affording mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small states alike.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Wilson belonged to the class of men whose dreams come true, for he had imagination and will-power, and the faculty of grasping opportunity. "The most unshakable will of our age," is the verdict of an observer who was closely associated with his work.<sup>2</sup> Mr. Wilson's plan for a new world-system took the form of the League of Nations, which conducts its business (with certain limitations) on the basis of publicity of speeches, votes, and documents, and which

<sup>1</sup> Address to Congress, January 8, 1918; the last two sentences are numbers 1 and 14 of the "Fourteen Points."

<sup>2</sup> Sir Arthur Salter, *Recovery* (1932), p. 243.

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requires that all treaties, to be valid, must be registered with the League and be published by it.<sup>1</sup>

The Covenant of the League of Nations was signed as part of the Peace Treaty of Versailles on June 28, 1919.<sup>2</sup> Thus the post-War age began with the principle of "open diplomacy" written into the Law of Nations. The phrase "New Diplomacy" was put about, expressing the view that in the management of international affairs, as in other things, the world was making a new start. The truth, however, is that diplomacy was developing, just as industry was, rather more rapidly than usual, owing to the unusual circumstances of World War. There was not a "New Diplomacy," but the old diplomacy going on, amplified, developed, but retaining continuity with its past.

Many definitions of diplomacy have been made; but perhaps it is easier, as Aristotle said of energy, to explain diplomacy by giving examples of what it does, than by trying to put into half a dozen words what it is. Yet there are good definitions of diplomacy, to be appreciated by people who know something about its action. A witty and sensible Austrian who had himself long served "the career," said that "diplomacy is common-sense applied to the affairs of the great world."<sup>3</sup> An English diplomatist of learning and of long experience agreed with the Austrian and called it: "the application of intelligence and tact to the conduct of official relations between governments of independent states."<sup>4</sup> A

<sup>1</sup> See *Rules of Procedure of the Council of the League of Nations, May 17, 1920*, article 5; *Procedure of the Assembly, Nov. 30, 1920*, rule 11. Covenant of the League of Nations, article 18. Texts in M. O. Hudson, *International Legislation* (1931), I, No. 1c, 1d, and No. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Dumreicher von Oesterreich, *Album d'un Diplomate*. See Fürst von Bülow, *Denkwürdigkeiten*, IV, p. 15.

<sup>3</sup> Satow, *Diplomatic Practice*, I, p. 1.

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more specific definition might be: "Diplomacy is the art of representing states and of conducting negotiations." One thing is certain: the existence of mankind at a reasonable level of civilization is impossible without peace, trade, and social relations between nations; and these things depend upon diplomacy, upon the representation of states and the adjustment of their contacts.

This wholesome inter-state or inter-national activity, which is diplomacy, has three great historical periods. The first (from about A.D. 476 to 1475) is the unorganized period, when states had either no official relations with each other, as in the "Dark Ages" after the fall of the Roman Empire; or when their relations were supposed to be regulated by feudal law and custom, as in the Middle Ages. There were no permanent diplomatic missions in the Middle Ages, and diplomacy was only conducted occasionally, to end a war or to arrange an interdynastic marriage.

The second period of diplomacy is from the Renaissance of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century to the World War. During this period, which began with the rise of fully sovereign nation-states, a profession of national representatives and inter-state negotiators gradually grew up and established itself. These professional diplomatists acted on certain principles and created a routine of intercourse which, in spite of interrupting wars, retained the powerful sovereign states in a "system" of peace until the system escaped from their control and went to ruin in the World War. This period, of the "European States System," may be dated from 1475 to 1914; it is the period of the "old" or career-diplomacy.

The third period, after the ruin of the old Europe and its system by the World War, began with the Conference of Paris, and the creation of the League of Nations. In this

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third period the representation of states, the work of establishing and maintaining between them a "system" of peace, has not passed out of the hands of the career-diplomatists, but is shared by their profession and by numerous other people—by Prime Ministers and "Foreign Ministers," who frequently represent their states in international conferences; by official "experts" of ministries of trade and commerce, of finance, and of labour, who leave their departments and go abroad on temporary missions; and by a new class, the strictly international officials of the Secretariat of the League of Nations. This third period is the period of the "new" diplomacy, which is not a substitution, but only an expansion of the old. The World War is the dividing line between the second and third periods of diplomacy, although some of the marks of the third period (for instance, conferences of Prime Ministers or of Foreign Ministers, and meetings of experts) were *occasionally* already found in the second, but not as established practices.

## CHAPTER II

### THE DIFFICULTY OF MAKING PEACE

It is a mistake to hold that wars are easily made. Fortunately for mankind, it is rather a difficult thing to make a war. For peace is not a passive state, easily interrupted; it is a natural, organic way of life which tends to continue in spite of disturbances and dislocations. Peoples, indeed (because they have no conception of what war means), are thoughtlessly ready sometimes to plunge into war, but Governments are usually reluctant. Frederick the Great and Bismarck were perhaps the only statesmen of modern times who wanted, and at the same time had the power, to make a war. Frederick, an absolute ruler in a comparatively simple age, started his war in 1740 easily enough, not troubling about any pretext, merely invading the Austrian province of Silesia. Bismarck, though less limited in power than most statesmen of his age, found it no easy task to start his "two wars," in 1866 and 1870, though (being determined to do so) he succeeded at last, for where there is a will, there is a way. One thing, however, is certain; if it is difficult to start a war, it is almost impossible to end it until it has run its course—that is, until one side is completely ruined and the other side almost, if not quite, ruined. War is not now, as in the eighteenth century, an affair of professional armies, ending when the professional army of one side, which could not be replaced, was destroyed. Even eighteenth-century war, as G. M. Trevelyan has so poignantly described in *England Under Queen Anne*, could drag on for years after a settlement satisfying one side or the other had become absolutely impossible.

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Under the modern "national service" systems, the field armies are "fed" by drafts from the civilian population, until there are no more to drain away. Therefore modern war between Great Powers, when it begins, goes on until breaking-point is reached on both sides, or until one side breaks down, and the other is so near breakdown that it is practically ruined for the future.

Many circumstances make it practically impossible to arrest a war, once it has begun. Indeed, even mobilization, which is not war, cannot be arrested half-way, nor carried out as a half-measure. When the Tsar on July 28, 1914, told his Generals to mobilize troops on certain parts of the frontier only, the Generals pointed out to him that under modern conditions there could be no such thing as partial mobilization. The military system of a Great Power is integral, elaborately organized, complex. It depends upon an intricate time-table for the summoning of individuals from every corner of the land, for collecting them, transporting them, feeding and housing them; it is impossible to alter these arrangements at short notice without creating hopeless confusion and delay. For the same reason, once the mobilization orders have been sent out, and the mobilization schedules put in force on the railroads, in the post offices, and all other public agencies, the process must go on until it is completed. It is technically impossible to stop mobilization half-way (as the German Government demanded that Russia should do on August 1, 1914); the men, who have been summoned and are being taken to their war-stations, must go on until they reach them. When they have arrived, when mobilization is complete, it is not war, but it is very close to war. Besides, as states mobilize, according to their efficiency and size, at different rates, a Power which can mobilize rapidly is not

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likely to defer hostilities while a larger but slower neighbour mobilizes its millions. Thus when the Tsar on August 1, 1914, proposed that both Russia and Germany might proceed with mobilization (strictly speaking, only a precautionary measure) without hostilities, the German Government simply ignored the idea. Mobilization, once begun, cannot be stopped; and before it ends, there is almost a certainty of war.

War, once begun (if great, highly organized states are engaged), runs its fatal course. Impelling motives make the belligerent Governments and peoples demand its continuance. There is, firstly, the reasonable desire for finality; "once the country is in for a war, let it go on and have done with it." "If the war is inconclusive, it will sooner or later have to be fought over again." "We shall only be leaving it for our children or grandchildren to fight for and settle." This argument, used frequently, and by good men during the World War, is based on the obvious fallacy that man can foresee the future. How can anyone predict that a resourceful future generation will not find a means of peacefully solving a question even though its less experienced ancestors have failed by peace to solve it. Time, experience, use and wont, instinct, reason, morality, religion, all are on the side of the later generation; so that putting off the final settlement to a later day is well worth trying. Yet this argument did not appeal, or was not allowed to appeal, even to the tortured populations of the last years of the World War; the cry of "go on to a finish" (*jusqu'au bout*, in the French phrase) was repeated to the end.

A second reason why war on the grand scale, once begun, can scarcely be arrested, is the reasonable desire, not merely to prevent a future war over the question at issue, but to prevent future war altogether. The World War was the

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“war to end war.” This opinion was held perfectly sincerely; it was not responsible for starting the War; but it was responsible, to some extent, for the continuance of it. At the conclusion of the War, the sincere desire to end all war produced the League of Nations, the greatest work of statesmanship in the modern world. Yet it was not necessary to continue the War for four and a half years in order to found the League of Nations. The conception of the League was due to the conviction in the minds of all reasonable people that war, in addition to being horrible, was a wholly unsatisfactory method of settling disputes; and this conviction was just as clear to thinking people half-way through the War as in 1918.

A third reason for the continuance of war, once it has begun, is the desire for a “satisfaction,” “indemnity,” or “reparation.” This desire has usually fixed upon an annexation of territory as the “satisfaction”; it may also take a pecuniary direction. It is all the more difficult to stop a war, once begun, because, in addition to the reasons owing to which it started, the demand for a satisfaction or indemnity is inevitably added thereto; and the longer the war goes on, the greater the indemnity that will be demanded; and therefore the greater the reluctance for the losing side to stop fighting, for it always hopes to snatch a victory and so to gain favourable terms. All wars, beginning for one reason, continue for this and additional reasons. For war imposes terrible sacrifices; and the people naturally demand that it go on until some return or compensation for those sacrifices shall be obtained. Therefore, from another point of view, the longer the war goes on, the more insistent the demand for continuing it. Sweden did not enter upon the Thirty Years War in 1630 in order to gain Pomerania, but every

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year that passed made it more and more difficult for the bankrupt state to relinquish the struggle without the gaining of some valuable German territory. The World War of 1914-18 was not begun in order to defend or to win Alsace-Lorraine; yet as soon as the War started, the possession of Alsace-Lorraine became a question at issue, and a question on which neither side could make a concession.

There are other reasons, of a baser kind, which make wars, once begun, go on. Governments which are conducting a war become nervous about their possible fate if they can show no successes for it; it requires a very brave and unselfish statesman to own defeat and "call off" an unsuccessful war. The military class, especially in high offices, are by education and character inclined to believe in a military solution; in war-time they are conscious of superior judgment compared with the civilians who in peace-time have made them feel so small. The very fact, quite inevitable, that high officers have all the intellectual interest of the great game of war with very little personal experience of the horrors of it, perhaps predisposes them to persist in endeavouring to obtain a military solution of the struggle.

Finally, there is one great and abiding reason why war, once begun, goes on; the diplomatists, who keep the peace, are unemployed. The transaction of affairs passes completely out of their hands when war begins, and they are not recalled until the war has been fought out. War is the negation of diplomacy, which means contact without arms. In war there is no contact between belligerents except by shot, shell, and bayonet. If the diplomatists on both sides were allowed to keep contact with each other throughout hostilities, every war would find its end far sooner than it does; for this reason, the Entente diplomats and those of the Central Powers

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were never allowed to meet in the four and a half years of the World War (except for a minor technical meeting about prisoners of war).<sup>1</sup>

Diplomatists have no place, or are given no place, in war on the grand scale, because if they were allowed to intervene they would settle the dispute by compromise. This is their way, and there is no other way to settle any dispute between great states without fighting. In great wars, however, nobody is ready for compromise; the sacrifices of war are so heavy that each side is determined to win all: no peace without victory! Besides, negotiation during war involves probably a relaxation of hostilities, perhaps even a suspension of hostilities; and once suspended it will be very difficult to induce the armies or their peoples to start fighting again. Field-Marshal Sir Henry Wilson registered this truth in his private diary on October 19, 1918. Haig had come over from France to discuss peace terms with the Government. Wilson writes:

We went over to 10 Downing Street. Present: Lloyd George, Bonar Law, Milner—and later A. J. B. and Wemyss. Douglas Haig said he would be satisfied if the Boches went back to the 1870 frontier. He is of opinion that, although the Boches have been roughly handled, chiefly by us, they are not yet reduced to accepting either my terms or Foch's. I expressed myself that the 1870 frontier was not good enough. True, France would recover Alsace and Lorraine; but the Allies would have no real asset with which to enforce all the terms which they thought absolutely essential to peace, i.e. Poland, Jugo-Slav, indemnities for Belgium, Rumania, Italy, etc. *I kept on repeating, with some success, that once "Cease fire" sounded, we could never go to war again (in this war).*<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See below, p. 44.

<sup>2</sup> Callwall, *Field-Marshal Sir Henry Wilson*, II, p. 138. The italics are mine.

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All these considerations help to explain the terrible truth that once great war has started, it is unlikely ever to stop until ruin is in sight for all parties. All the peace-efforts (and there were very many) made during the World War failed, until the Central Powers had no reserves of men left and were crumbling under Red revolution; and the Entente Powers likewise had no reserves of men left (fortunately the United States supplied a margin of men) and were apprehensive of revolution. Haig, "fully aware of the difficulties that were arising over man-power in the United Kingdom," held it to be "imperative that the negotiations for an armistice now being set in train should put a term to further fighting." Added to this consideration was another; Lloyd George asked Wilson if he would rather have Bolshevism in Germany or an armistice. "I unhesitatingly said *armistice*," Wilson notes in his Diary (November 10, 1918).<sup>1</sup>

Efforts to secure peace were being made, officially or semi-officially, practically all through the World War. The Entente Powers bound themselves by the Pact of London, September 5, 1914, only to make peace in common. Agreements to a similar effect bound the Central Powers together. Most of the peace-efforts during the War were made by one belligerent or another after consultation with its ally; or else, subsequently, these peace-efforts, before being completed, would have required consultation and agreement of allies. Nevertheless, alliances did not prevent armistice-terms and peace-terms being made separately by Bulgaria, Turkey, Austria, Russia, but only after domestic ruin had come first. It was not treaties that kept allies so long and so disastrously together in the struggle, but the inexorability of the war-god—the fact that when modern states are in war they are involved in a com-

<sup>1</sup> Callwall, *Field-Marshal Sir Henry Wilson*, II, pp. 145, 148.

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plexity of conditions from which there is no way out but victory or ruin: it is unlikely that even this choice will be offered in the future.

The first opportunity for breaking off the War came after the Battle of the Marne. The railway, telegraph, and motor-lorry have altered the character of modern warfare in its initial stage. Formerly armies were mobilized slowly, and the campaign was launched little by little. In the twentieth century all the front-line men can be summoned to their depots, concentrated in battalions, divisions, corps, and armies, taken by rail almost to the point of action, and launched in their millions against their adversaries, all within two or three weeks of the outbreak. This vast initial battle (or series of battles) overstrains the adversaries without exhausting their ultimate strength. It leaves them breathless, wearied, and—victorious or defeated—checked for the time being. Both sides have made their great concentrations and effort; the great armies have clashed; success or failure is not finally achieved, but enough has been achieved to make both sides realize the vastness of the conflict, the possibilities of means of destruction. A pause ensues while the armies rest, “dig themselves in,” call out the second reserves, count the cost. Then is the moment for statesmanship; then diplomacy, thrust aside at the outbreak of war, has a chance. If it fails or is baulked of its opportunity, the moment passes, and the reconditioned and reinforced armies wearisomely resume the conflict, this time for a long war of attrition.

There was no official move of belligerents towards peace after the Battle of the Marne which was fought on September 6–10, 1914. President Wilson was not oblivious to the opportunity for a peace-initiative provided by the great “thrust” of the Germans to the Marne and by the inevitable

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pause when the thrust had been made; and through his friend, Colonel House, he made enquiries in London. He had thrice already, before and after the opening of the conflict, offered mediation.<sup>1</sup> On September 18, 1914, a week after the Battle of the Marne, Colonel House, with Mr. Wilson's authorization, made an endeavour to bring the British and German Governments into conversation concerning peace-terms through Spring-Rice and Bernstorff, ambassadors at Washington. Bernstorff showed eagerness to engage in parleys, as did also Dumba, the Austro-Hungarian ambassador. Whether their Governments approved of their attitude is not known. The Entente ambassadors and Governments showed no readiness to engage in parleys. The difficulties in the way of peace negotiations at this stage of the War were partly lack of goodwill (in all the belligerent Governments), partly the fact that the ambassadors at Washington had no instructions from their Foreign Ministers, and that the Foreign Ministers themselves were not in touch with each other. "Europe was caught in a horror from which she could not rescue herself."<sup>2</sup> Colonel House continued to engage in conversations with the ambassadors in the United States for months. In February 1915 he went to London and spent nearly a month in conversations with Grey and other leading Englishmen. The German Foreign Office encouraged him to visit Berlin, and he went there, and to Paris. Each belligerent was still bent upon gaining its "waraims." Besides, the favouring moment (after the Marne) had passed, though there was still a possibility of peace if

<sup>1</sup> July 7th, August 5th, and September 5, 1914. Seymour, *The Intimate Papers of Colonel House*, I, pp. 278-80, 289, 327-28. Pingaud, *Les Tentatives de Paix pendant la première année de la Grande Guerre*, in *Revue d'Histoire diplomatique*, October 1931.

<sup>2</sup> Seymour, op. cit., I, pp. 330-59.

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will-power and speed were employed. "Quick action was necessary, and it was a question of hours rather than days. . . . I see no insuperable obstacle in the way of peace, and I feel if the belligerents would begin to talk, they might soon come to an agreement."<sup>1</sup> But they would not talk *together*. House wrote:

[From London.] There is no feeling whatever, excepting among a very small circle, for anything out of the War excepting a permanent settlement, evacuation, and indemnity to Belgium; but no one believes that Germany is ready for such terms. . . . [From Berlin.] It is a sad commentary that the Governments of each of the belligerents would probably welcome peace negotiations, and yet none of them are able safely to make a beginning. . . . [From Paris.] Everyone seems to want peace, but nobody is willing to concede enough to get it.<sup>2</sup>

While these words were being written, M. Paléologue, French ambassador of St. Petersburg, was reporting a peace-overture transmitted by Austria-Hungary to the Russian Government, and immediately rejected, without, so far as is known, the British Government being informed.

Separate proposals were made after the Battle of the Marne to President Wilson on the part of Venezuela, Switzerland, and Holland for the convening of a conference of neutral states, with a view to bringing about a peace. Mr. Wilson felt that he could not take up these proposals.

At the end of September 1914, King Alfonso of Spain personally, and at the beginning of October the Government of Spain officially,<sup>3</sup> proposed to Mr. Wilson mediation with

<sup>1</sup> House to Gerrard (U.S.A. ambassador to Germany), March 1, 1915, Seymour, op. cit., I, p. 383.

<sup>2</sup> Seymour, op. cit., I, pp. 380, 407, 420 (February 15th, March 21st, April 15, 1915).

<sup>3</sup> Pingaud, op. cit., p. 400.

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a view first to an armistice, and next to a Peace Conference. Mr. Wilson, however, preferred to act separately through Colonel House, as already described.

The new Pope Benedict XV (his predecessor, Pius X, had died on August 20th) also seized the occasion after the Battle of the Marne. His election to the papal throne took place (September 4, 1914) two days before the fateful battle began. The Entente Powers, unfortunately, made no diplomatic use of their great victory. On September 8th, however, Benedict XV, in his *Ubi Primum*, made a passionate exhortation to the clergy of the whole Church, that they should insistently press for peace: "Let them privately by humble prayer, publicly by frequent supplication, pursue, urge, and petition God, the arbiter and master of all things, that, mindful of his compassion, he remove this scourge of his anger, by which he exacts from the peoples the penalty of their sins."<sup>1</sup>

This appeal had no visible effect upon the belligerent Governments. An emphatic encyclical, which he issued on November 1st, was equally without result. In this long and closely reasoned message, the Pope vigorously and appealingly declared that the War was really a civil war of Europe and, as such, a disgrace to humanity: "Who would think that the nations thus armed against each other are all descended from one ancestor, share the same nature, belong to the same human family? . . . We earnestly beseech Princes and Rulers that, moved by the sight of so many tears, so much blood already shed, they delay not to bring back to their peoples the life-giving blessings of peace."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Pergent, insistent, contendant, privatim humili prece, publice supplicationum frequentia, arbitrum ac dominatorem rerum Deum, quoad, suae misericordiae memor, hoc flagellum iracundiae, quo quidem a populis poenas peccatorum repetit, deponat. *Acta Apostolicae Sedis, Acta Ben. PP. XV*, September 8, 1914, p. 501.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 648.

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The Pope's proposal for a Christmas armistice or "Truce of God" was equally fruitless. The introduction into a statesmanlike, humanitarian peace-note of the "Roman Question," the old controversy over the Pope's Temporal Power, was a mistake. It led to the insertion, at the demand of the Italian Government, of the clause in the Adriatic Treaty (Treaty of London, April 26, 1915, between the Entente Powers and Italy) to the effect that the Papacy should not be permitted to take part in the eventual peace negotiations at the end of the War.

M. Eyschen, the talented Luxembourg Minister of State, who was in personal touch with the Emperor William II and the Chancellor Bethmann-Hollweg during the military occupation of Luxembourg, journeyed to Switzerland in November 1914 and opened unofficial conversations with the President of the Swiss Confederation, with the object of inducing him to undertake mediation. He appears also to have had communication with the Belgian, French, and Russian Governments through their legations. There was no result from M. Eyschen's initiatives. Representations made by King Christian X of Denmark to the Emperor William and the Tsar of Russia were not listened to.<sup>1</sup>

The Russian statesman Witte, aged sixty-five, a former President of the Council of Ministers, who had been unemployed since 1906, made an effort to obtain peace after the Marne. On September 4, 1914, he arrived in Petrograd from Biarritz, and on September 12th he sought an interview with Paléologue, the French ambassador. Witte was a Russian bureaucrat, of German extraction; he was a man of high stature, powerful physique, strong mind, proud, ironical manner. Everybody was a little afraid of his judgment, his

<sup>1</sup> Pingaud, op. cit., pp. 402, 406-7.

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contempt for superficiality, and for sentimentalism. Witte, in conversation, brushed aside all arguments about the supposed interests of Russia in this World War. Russia's mission in the Balkans was "a romantic, out-of-date chimæra"; prospects of territorial gain?—was not the empire of the Tsar big enough? Distribution of the Hohenzollern and Habsburg power—that means the Republic in all Central Europe, and at the same time the end of the Tsardom. *It is necessary to liquidate as soon as possible this stupid adventure. Russia will never find a more favourable occasion.* Witte achieved nothing, however, then or subsequently, although throughout the winter of 1914–15 he pursued his campaign for peace with "steady and overbearing audacity" (*audace tranquille et hautaine*). When Witte died (1915) Delcassé, French Foreign Minister, telegraphed to Paléologue: "A great centre of intrigues is extinguished with him" (*un grand foyer d'intrigues s'éteint avec lui*).<sup>1</sup>

M. Paléologue, like most of the diplomatic corps, believed that the conservation of the Habsburg Monarchy in the Danubian area would be a benefit to Europe. He was also convinced that a separate peace between the Entente and Austria-Hungary was a possibility, and that such a peace was the best means of ensuring success in the war against Germany. Paléologue put this idea before Sazonov on January 1, 1915, but received no encouragement at all; nevertheless, he thought it worth while to telegraph a report of the conversation to Delcassé. The French Foreign Minister replied that Paléologue must never say a word which could lead the Russian Government to think that France would not leave Austria-Hungary to it to dispose of. Paléologue was consternated.

Towards the end of March (1915) the Austro-Hungarian

<sup>1</sup> Paléologue, *La Russie des Tsars* (1921), I, pp. 121, 188, 317.

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ambassador at Berlin, Prince Gottfried von Hohenlohe-Schillingfürst, formerly military attaché to the Austro-Hungarian embassy at Petrograd, found means to send a letter to the Tsar. In this, the prince recalled the friendliness with which Nicholas had always treated him, insisted on the pacific disposition of the Austrian court, and proposed that the Tsar should send a person of confidence to Switzerland to meet an emissary of the Emperor Francis Joseph. The Tsar showed the letter to Sazonov, who communicated its terms to Paléologue. "This letter," said Sazonov, "shows how low is the Austrian *morale*; nevertheless it will remain without an answer. The old Francis Joseph is not yet sufficiently disgusted with the War to resign himself to the conditions which we claim to impose on him."<sup>1</sup>

In the year 1915 there were several peace-initiatives of which two at any rate seem to have had serious possibilities. One was a proposal from the Turkish Commandant of the First Army Corps at Constantinople, offering to overthrow the existing *régime*, and to join the Entente Powers if they would guarantee the territorial integrity of Turkey. This proposal, transmitted through M. Venizelos of Greece to London, was communicated by Grey to the French and Russian Governments. M. Sazonov declined to sacrifice Russia's claim on Constantinople (February 14, 1915). Shortly afterwards the Dardanelles campaign was opened, preventing any further question of a negotiated peace with Turkey.<sup>2</sup>

After the German armies had routed the Russian armies on the Eastern Front in May 1915, a semi-official overture for peace appears to have been made by Germany to Russia, through a Director of the Deutsche Bank. This gentleman

<sup>1</sup> Paléologue, op. cit., I, p. 334; see also I, pp. 245-6, 258.

<sup>2</sup> Pingaud, op. cit., p. 408.

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journeyed to Sweden and conveyed tempting proposals for a separate peace with Russia to M. Neklyudov, Russian minister at Stockholm. The Russian Government declined.<sup>1</sup> One more effort was made by a neutral this year. On July 26, 1915, Pope Benedict XV took the opportunity of the first anniversary of the outbreak of the World War to issue a passionate appeal for peace. It was answered by uncompromising public speeches of Bethmann-Hollweg and Poincaré. In the autumn (November) the Dutch and Swiss Governments made statements to the effect that the continually changing fortune of war made it impossible for any neutral Government to offer mediation without appearing to favour one side or another. Henceforth they must leave the initiative to be taken by one or more of the belligerents.<sup>2</sup> The resources of civilization appeared to be at an end.

President Wilson and Colonel House, however, did not think so. In the early months of 1916 they made another effort to bring about peace, this time with the interesting suggestion that the belligerent which refused to go to a conference should be deemed the aggressor and would find the mediator in arms against him.

Colonel House arrived in England for his second great peace-effort during the War on January 6, 1916. On January 20th he left London for Berlin, by way of Paris and Geneva. He returned to Paris at the beginning of February and was back in London on February 10th. The result of these journeys was a plan to the effect that Mr. Wilson should invite the belligerents to a Peace Conference, to which (Colonel House ascertained) the Entente Powers would agree to come. Should Germany refuse to come, "the United States would probably enter the War against

<sup>1</sup> Pingaud, op. cit., pp. 410-11.

<sup>2</sup> Pingaud, op. cit., p. 412.

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Germany." If Germany came to the Conference, but proved to be unreasonable, "the United States would probably leave the Conference as a belligerent on the side of the Allies."<sup>1</sup> Colonel House returned to Washington with the plan in the form of a memorandum, dated February 22, 1916, to which Mr. Wilson gave his consent by cable on March 8 (1916). As success in calling a conference depended, to some extent, upon the choice of a suitable moment, Colonel House arranged to keep in touch with Grey by cable; Grey was to send him word of the moment for sending out the invitations to the conference. The word never came.

The Asquith Government broke up in December 1916 and Grey went out of office. He gave a copy of the Memorandum to his successor. In his memoirs Grey writes: "For reasons that I did not know at the time, the memorandum was out of date";<sup>2</sup> though no completely satisfactory explanation has ever been given of the reason for this. When he was in London on February 3, 1916, House had written to Mr. Wilson: "I am trying to impress upon both England and France the precariousness of the situation and the gamble that a continuance of the War involves." As the year 1916 went on, and the Somme battles were begun (July 1st), it appears that the Allies thought the gamble worth going on with.

All the Governments were in this gamble or, to put it another way, they wanted peace, and yet were afraid of taking a decision at any one time to make peace, in case, by waiting, they could obtain better terms later.

<sup>1</sup> Seymour, *The Intimate Papers of Colonel House*, II, pp. 200-2. The President of the United States cannot go to war without the consent of Congress. As Mr. Wilson could not "discount" the consent of Congress, the word "probably" was employed in the *Grey-House Memorandum*.

<sup>2</sup> Grey, *Twenty-five Years*, II, p. 129.

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"The Chancellor," wrote Prince Max of Baden concerning Bethmann-Hollweg in the winter of 1916-17, "shrank at bottom from the responsibility he might one day have to bear before his own conscience and before History—the responsibility for having brought about a bad peace through failure to utilize his last chance of victory to the full."<sup>1</sup> Each new lacerating phase in the struggle was to be the last. "One must be cautious of opinions and prophecies," wrote von Jagow, the Secretary of State, to Prince Max, July 5, 1916; "but it does appear to me that the present moment means the climax of the struggle and that an ebb will set in after this, and bring us to some sort of solution. A greater effort than this can at least hardly be imagined."<sup>2</sup> Yet there were two more years of such efforts to pass before some sort of solution—through the ruin of one side and something not far short of the ruin of all the rest—was to be found.

Towards the end of October the titanic Battles of the Somme were ending without any military result except the loss of some hundreds of thousands of lives. Grey then made a speech before the Foreign Press Association, October 23, 1916, which seemed to be a kind of peace overture; and he suggested that an impartial tribunal should consider whether the Russian original mobilization had been aggressive, or whether any other Power than Germany had planned to attack through Belgium. He also proposed the establishing of a League of Peace (that is, a "League of Nations"). Prince Max thought that the German Government should have seized this opportunity for a compromise, "for we should have won on one of Grey's questions and lost on the other." Bethmann-Hollweg replied by a speech before the Main

<sup>1</sup> *The Memoirs of Prince Max of Baden* (trans. 1928), I, p. 54.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, I, p. 19.

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Committee of the Reichstag on November 9th. He accepted the idea of a League of Peace, but rejected the idea of inquiry into responsibility through a tribunal.

On October 31, 1916, the Emperor William II wrote to Bethmann-Hollweg proposing the issue of a peace-note. The proposal, however, was not put into effect for over a month. On December 12, 1916, the German peace-note was presented to the neutral states, with the request that they should bring it to the knowledge of the belligerents. This note was immediately published. It stated that "the spiritual and material progress which were the pride of Europe at the beginning of the twentieth century are threatened with ruin"; and declared that the propositions which Germany and her allies were prepared to make were "an appropriate basis for the establishment of a lasting peace." It did not, however, disclose what those propositions were. The note concluded with a declaration that, in the event of this offer being refused, "the Central Powers disclaimed responsibility before humanity and history for the continuance of the struggle." The failure to disclose terms was fatal to this peace-effort. The Entente Powers felt that they could not take the risk of suspending hostilities in order to negotiate on terms which they might find to be quite unacceptable. In practice, it would have been impossible to negotiate without suspending hostilities; and once suspended, they could not be resumed. The offer was rejected by the Entente Governments.

On December 18, 1916, Mr. Wilson, who was President of a still neutral United States, issued a peace-note to neutrals and to belligerents. He suggested that all the belligerent Governments should "make an avowal of their respective views as to the terms upon which the War might be concluded." He pointed out that all parties to the struggle had

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declared their war-aims or peace-conditions in such general terms that "they seem the same on both sides." Thus the contest was going on to really undefined ends, and there was only a prospect of million after million of human lives continuing to be offered up, "until on the one side or the other there are no more to offer." The German Government replied briefly, proposing an immediate meeting of delegates of the belligerents in a neutral place, but passing over in complete silence the invitation to avow its peace-terms. The Entente Powers replied with a statement of terms, such as there was not the remotest possibility of the Central Powers accepting except after complete defeat: restoration of Belgium, Serbia, Montenegro, with indemnities; evacuation of invaded territories of France, Russia, Rumania; restitution of Alsace-Lorraine; liberation of Italians, Slavs, Rumans, Czechoslovaks, from Austria-Hungary; expulsion of Turkey from Europe. Mr. Wilson made no more offers of mediation. The Entente Powers by so stringently stating their terms, or rather by overstating them (as it eventually turned out), made a negotiated peace thereafter practically impossible.

In 1917 there was all the less chance of a peaceful solution as there was no longer a great neutral; for on April 6th the United States entered upon a state of war against Germany on account of the "unrestricted submarine warfare" of that Power. Except for the American intervention, which brought little material, but much moral, help to the Entente Powers, the year 1917 had nothing to relieve the universal gloom. On July 19, 1917, the German Reichstag passed a "Peace Resolution" which was meant to be an offer of negotiations: "The Reichstag strives for a peace of understanding. . . . With such a peace forced acquisitions of territory and political, economic, or financial oppressions are inconsistent." A few

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days afterwards an influential Belgian patriot (whose name has not been disclosed) sent a message by a secret route, "so carefully disguised that I cannot disclose it even now," to Prince Max of Baden. This message was to the effect that if the German Government would make an authentic declaration recognizing the independence and integrity of Belgium, the movement among the Belgian public for dissociation from the War would probably lead to a general negotiation. Prince Max brought the message to the Emperor and pressed him to make the required declaration; but now, as right through the whole War, the German Government, notwithstanding constant professions of disinterestedness, could not bring itself to declare that it had no aims upon Belgium. Even Herr von Kühlmann, a clear-sighted and fearless statesman, objected to the idea of such a statement, "because he did not wish to give away his best pawn before the peace negotiations."<sup>1</sup>

Pope Benedict XV now made another effort to loosen the horrible vice in which the Governments and peoples were so firmly and so helplessly held. On August 1, 1917, in the midst of the long-drawn-out agonies of the hopeless battles of Passchendaele, the Pope issued a Message "to rulers of the belligerent peoples." The Message had both an appeal and a plan. The appeal was to reason and common sense: "Is this civilized world to be turned into a field of death, and is Europe, so glorious and flourishing, to rush, as carried by a universal folly, to the abyss, and take a hand in its own suicide?" The plan was for a peace based on agreement to reduce armaments, to establish arbitration, to ensure freedom of the seas, the independence and integrity of Belgium, reciprocal renunciation of war-costs, settlement of territorial

<sup>1</sup> *Max of Baden*, I, pp. 132, 136.

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claims in a conciliatory spirit "in consideration of the immense advantages of durable peace with disarmament." Returning to the appeal to reason and common sense, the Pope expressed a hope that these suggestions would lead to "an early termination of the terrible struggle which has, more and more, the appearance of a useless massacre."

The Pope's proposals had caught the Allied and Associated Powers still without any concerted peace policy. Each Power had its own war-aims, conceived without any reference to its ally's. The main interest of the British Government was the saving of Belgium from German domination. The British answer, conveyed verbally<sup>1</sup> by Count de Salis, H.M. Envoy to the Vatican, was, in the circumstances, reasonable:

His Majesty's Government, not having as yet been able to take the opinion of their Allies, cannot say whether it would serve any useful purpose to offer a reply, or, if so, what form such a reply would take. Although the Central Powers have admitted their guilt in regard to Belgium,<sup>2</sup> they have never definitely intimated that they intend either to restore her to her former state of entire independence or to make good the damage she has suffered at their hands. Till they and their Allies state officially how far they are willing to go in the matter of reparation and restoration, have announced their war-aims, and put forward suggestions as to the measures which may offer an effective guarantee that the world will not again be plunged into the horrors by which it has been devastated, His Majesty's Government consider it unlikely that any progress towards peace can be made.

The French Government, which included in its war-aims

<sup>1</sup> Count de Salis, foreword to *Vatican Diplomacy*, by Humphrey Johnson (1933), p. 5.

<sup>2</sup> This refers to Bethmann-Hollweg's speech in the Reichstag on the outbreak of war, August 4, 1914 (in *Collected Diplomatic Documents* (1915), p. 438).

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the recovery of Alsace-Lorraine (impossible to obtain under the Pope's proposals), decided to make no reply. The United States Government replied that a peace made according to the Pope's proposed terms would leave the German military oligarchy free to recuperate and to become again a danger to the world. The reply of the Italian Government was not encouraging. The German Government's answer was sympathetic in form, but completely silent on the question of Belgium and the renunciation of indemnification for war-costs. "Perhaps," writes a German patriot, "the endeavours of the Holy See would have been successful, if they had not been thwarted by those who believed Germany's existence dependent on the possession of the North of France and of Belgium."<sup>1</sup> But France would not have made peace in any case without a promise of Alsace-Lorraine, nor Italy without the Trentino. The Entente Powers and the United States also believed that, in fact, Germany could not be negotiated with.

Continuance of the War was certainly bringing complete collapse on one side or on both; and indeed Russia was already disintegrating. Accordingly, efforts, mostly rather half-hearted, at opening peace negotiations went on for the rest of the War. In November 1917 (after the Bolshevik Revolution of October) a meeting was arranged between General Smuts, then member of the British War Cabinet, and Count Albert Mensdorff, formerly Austro-Hungarian ambassador to Great Britain. The two statesmen met in Switzerland, but nothing has ever been divulged about the negotiations, which had no result.

Meanwhile, since the last month of 1916, and throughout the first six months of 1917, a very powerful and well-directed

<sup>1</sup> Prince Hubertus Loewenstein, *The Tragedy of a Nation* (1934), p. 25.

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effort to inaugurate a separate Austro-Hungarian peace by negotiation was going on. This was the work of Prince Sixte of Bourbon-Parma, an officer in the Belgian Army. The death of the old Emperor of Austria, Francis Joseph, on November 21, 1916, and the accession of his nephew, Charles, seemed to offer an opportunity for a new start in Austrian policy. Charles was married to Zita, a sister of Prince Sixte. On December 15th the mother of the Empress Zita and Sixte wrote to her son urgently requesting him to come and see her. Sixte, with leave from King Albert of Belgium and with the knowledge of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, went to Switzerland, and met his mother at Neuchâtel (January 29, 1917). This meeting led to another at Neuchâtel, three weeks later, this time between Sixte and Count Erdödy, who was in the confidence of the Emperor Charles. The negotiation was now communicated to the British Government as well as to the French. In March Sixte went through Switzerland to Vienna and had an interview (March 23rd) with the Emperor Charles and Count Czernin. Sixte returned to Paris with a letter from Charles declaring: "I will support, by all means and using all my personal influence with my allies, the just French claims relative to Alsace-Lorraine." According to Herr von Kühlmann, the question of Alsace-Lorraine, which France and Germany claimed with equal determination, was the one thing now which stood in the way of peace negotiations. If, however, Austria acknowledged that France should have Alsace-Lorraine and was ready to make peace on this basis, Germany would have to give way. In his letter, the Emperor Charles also declared for the restoration of Belgium and Serbia (with an outlet on the Adriatic); and in conversation with Sixte, he showed willingness to cede the Trentino to Italy, but

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not Trieste, and only in return for compensation—an Italian colony. The negotiation was continued by Sixte at Paris, Neuchâtel, and at Vienna again (May 8–9, 1917). Finally, Count Czernin in a letter (May 9, 1917) definitely stated that Austria was ready to enter into negotiations for a general peace.<sup>1</sup> The Emperor suggested that diplomatists should be sent to Switzerland to open regular peace-negotiations. Sixte went to London and met the members of the British War Cabinet in June. He was listened to sympathetically. Sixte then returned to his military duties in the Belgian Army, expecting to hear that a conference of the Entente Powers and Austria had been arranged. Here the whole negotiation ended. Apparently, the Italian Foreign Minister, Baron Sonnino, refused to come to any conference, on the ground that Austria's offer of territorial compensation to Italy was insufficient.

One more peace-effort, of a merely "tentative" and uncommittal type, was carried on from August 7, 1917, to February 25, 1918. This was not a Cabinet or Foreign Office affair on the Entente side, and was not exactly official on the Austrian. It was conducted by the French War Office through a General Staff Officer, Count Armand, and Count Revertera, a retired Austrian diplomatist, who had some authority from Count Czernin, the Austrian Foreign Minister. The French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the British Foreign Office knew of the Armand-Revertera meetings

<sup>1</sup> Prince Sixte in his report to the French President (M. Poincaré) interpolated, in translating Count Czernin's letter, the words *paix séparée*. These words do not appear in the German original. Both original and translation (with the interpolated or mistranslated words) are in Manteyer, *L'Offre de Paix Séparée de l'Autriche* (1920), pp. 178–80. Actually there was no offer on the part of Austria of a *separate* peace, but, on the contrary, of negotiations for a general peace. See P. Renouvin, *La Crise Européenne et la Grande Guerre* (1934), pp. 452–55.

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(which took place at Fribourg in Switzerland), but had no part in directing them. Count Armand had, as the basis of his conversations with Count Revertera, notes drafted in the French War Office under directions from Foch. The negotiation is said to have broken down because Austria still refused to consider the cession of Trieste to Italy. The great and astonishingly successful German offensive of March 1918 made, while it lasted, any peace-negotiations on the part of the Central Powers unlikely and, from the military point of view, inexpedient; and when the offensive was over and the Central Power's military strength failing, there was nothing to induce the Entente Powers to accept a peace by negotiation. Only surrender-terms were now possible.

When at last, in the great race against revolution and ruin, the Central Powers were first overtaken by the grisly demons, the difficulty of making peace was found to be greater than ever. The signature of a discredited, ruined, defeated Government, still less the signature of an unstable revolutionary Government, inspires no confidence among the victors; nor, indeed, is it easy on the vanquished side to find statesmen willing to undertake the responsibility and the odium of a surrender-armistice or a surrender-peace. The political confusion of the Central Powers in the winter of 1918-19, and the political uncertainties among the peoples and Governments of the Allied and Associated States, combined with passions, prejudices, and public and secret commitments inevitably left over from so long, so desperate, so uncompromising a struggle, rendered the circumstances of the ultimate peace-settlement incredibly difficult. The history of the peace-efforts, from the opening of the fateful Twelve Days on July 23, 1914, to the signing of the German Armistice on November 11th, is only another version of the ancient

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tale of the Sybilline Books. An opportunity missed does not make another opportunity impossible; but each successive opportunity is twice as difficult as the one before; and nobody can be sure that the present opportunity of the moment is not the last. For Germany the opportunity was actually the last; for Europe as a whole it just missed being the last by a margin, who knows how narrow?

The English workers for peace would not let the year 1917 pass without making an effort. A number of public men who were not in office met from time to time at Lansdowne House, Berkeley Square. Lord Lansdowne, the chief of this group, was a distinguished public servant, a former Viceroy of India, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs who had made the Anglo-Japanese Alliance of 1902 and the Entente Conventions of 1904. He had served, without salary, in the First Coalition War Government of 1915–16.

While still a member of the Cabinet, in November 1916 Lord Lansdowne had written a letter, proposing peace by negotiation, to the Prime Minister, Mr. Asquith. This letter was not published and had no result. In November 1917 Lord Lansdowne, after consultation with his group of friends, wrote another letter, and offered it to *The Times*, which, however, declined to publish it. He showed it to Sir Arthur Hardinge, Permanent Under-Secretary of the Foreign Office, and apparently obtained from Hardinge some general approval of its form. He also acquainted Mr. Balfour, who was then Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, with the contents of the letter. Having taken these precautions and obtained encouragement, Lord Lansdowne thereupon sent the letter to the *Daily Telegraph*, which published it on November 29th. The letter, although it created a great sensation, was not sensational in itself. It argued, in calm, moderate language,

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for peace by negotiation, and proposed terms of a general nature (including security by arbitration and freedom of the seas) such as the Governments of the Central Powers in their notes and speeches either approved or, at any rate, had not repudiated. Lord Lansdowne was not "defeatist." He wrote: "We are not going to lose this war, but its prolongation will spell ruin for the civilized world, and an infinite addition to the load of human suffering which already weighs upon it. . . . In my belief, if the war is to be brought to a close in time to avert a world-wide catastrophe, it will be brought to a close because on both sides the peoples of the countries involved realize that it has already lasted too long."

The British Government, the Coalition under Mr. Lloyd George, was indignant with Lord Lansdowne's initiative, and was strong enough to prevent any relaxation of the war-effort. It has been said, in criticism of Lord Lansdowne's step, that it was made too late—in the autumn of 1917, when the "Allied and Associated Powers" were determined to prosecute the war against Germany until they inflicted a "knock-out blow."<sup>1</sup> In the early summer of 1918, however, when the German offensive movement was still victoriously progressing, Lord Lansdowne was preparing another letter. Germany, though winning battles, was really in a precarious situation; and the German Government had proposed, at the end of May 1918, that Anglo-German negotiations, which were to take place at The Hague on certain technical questions about prisoners of war, should be utilized for discussion of peace-terms. It is possible that Lord Lansdowne knew of this proposal, and meant to support it by the issue of another letter. Mr. Wickham Steed, the Foreign Editor of *The Times*, also knew both of the German offer and of the proposed

<sup>1</sup> J. A. R. Marriott in *Quarterly Review*, January 1930.

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Lansdowne letter. Mr. Steed thought that “a sensational leading article in the *Daily Mail*” would, in the circumstances, be a more effective weapon against these peace moves than something written in *The Times*. By arrangement with Lord Northcliffe, who controlled both journals, the article was published in the *Daily Mail*, June 18, 1918. Next morning Lord Northcliffe telephoned to Mr. Steed: “We have hit the bull’s eye.” The new Lansdowne letter was never published.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> H. Wickham Steed, *Through Thirty Years*, II, pp. 218–20.

## CHAPTER III

### THE OLD DIPLOMACY

THE diplomatic service arose in Western Europe, and may be said to have been established when temporary missions were changed into permanent missions towards the end of the fifteenth century. Although the missions became permanent, the *personnel* was transitory until about the middle of the seventeenth century. From that time diplomacy was a lifelong vocation or career, and the public servants who devoted themselves to it formed the *corps diplomatique*. The diplomatists were bound to serve the interests of their state; but they also pursued a general interest, namely peace and international "comity." Moreover, their profession was highly respected, and they were regarded everywhere as aristocrats. Now aristocracy is always, to some extent, cosmopolitan, both in mental outlook and also in blood; for aristocrats have wives from other nations than their own. Therefore, because their object was of universal importance, and because they were an aristocracy, the diplomatists of every state looked upon themselves as belonging to an international corporation or profession, the *corps diplomatique*.

This international or supra-national aspect of the diplomatic profession was encouraged by the fact that diplomatists never served in their own countries, but lived abroad, in the same centres, among strangers. Exiles in a strange city always foregather, and all the more so if they have common duties and a common profession. If they are in an "exotic" capital like Constantinople or Peking, or in a small capital, like Copenhagen, The Hague, pre-War Athens, or Bucharest,

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they form a compact society in themselves. Describing the diplomatic corps in Athens, a diplomatist writes: "All this little variegated world found itself together every day either at golf, or bathing at Phaleron, or in the salons. They picnicked in the woods of Eleusis or of Colone. They acted comedies, and improvised charades. There was even an 'academy' where youthful secretaries read learned papers and engaged in discussion in purest French. Every Legation had its 'day,' and from 4 to 7 the salons were never empty."<sup>1</sup> Naturally, it was not all pleasure; there was business to do, though sometimes it languished, as in the case of the Dutch *charge d'affaires* who solemnly registered with a serial number for deposit in the archives copies of all the replies made to invitations received. The total number of diplomatists was never great. An active long-service diplomatist would be more or less familiar with almost the whole world-wide diplomatic corps. The same families often appeared, generation after generation, in the service, so that diplomatists were continually meeting the sons or nephews of former colleagues.

The term colleague, habitually used by one diplomatist in referring to another, is not a meaningless or empty form. Commanders of opposing armies or admirals of different national navies never call each other colleagues, although the military and naval professions are more ancient and just as aristocratic and world-wide as the diplomatic. The idea of the "collegiality" of the diplomatic profession must not be exaggerated, but it is real, has been recognized since the seventeenth century, and has always conduced to peace. M. Jules Cambon writes:

To-day, of all the peculiarities of the diplomatic life, what most strikes the general public is the amicable and often cordial

<sup>1</sup> W. D'Ormesson, *Enfances diplomatiques*, p. 85.

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relations which exist between the diplomatists of the different countries and which produce between them, if policy and patriotism do not oppose it, a sort of corporate spirit and sometimes comradeship (*une sorte d'esprit de corps et, quelquefois, une camaraderie*). Those who are surprised at this do not know what it is to remain for long years abroad, isolated and far from home. The young men who enter into the profession could not live the whole of their life leaving each other and finding each other again in the various capitals of the world, experiencing sometimes the same adventures, and gaining, by the same steps, the grades of their career, without feeling pleasure at meeting each other again.<sup>1</sup>

Thus described, the solidarity of the diplomatic profession would seem, while still a real thing, to be somewhat weaker now than it was in the first half or three-quarters of the nineteenth century, in the time of Metternich, Talleyrand, Nesselrode, Pozzo di Borgo, Brunnow, Bunsen, Hübner, Lord Lyons, Lord Odo Russell, and Beust, when Governments were aristocratic and not consciously nationalist. The diminution in the number of Great Powers, the increase in the number of small states (and consequently in the number of diplomatists) with small sectional interests and little prestige, has inevitably diminished the solidarity of the profession. Some of the new states are said actually to hate each other; hatred is essentially unaristocratic and undiplomatic. The destruction of the great Habsburg Empire, of the brilliant if somewhat exotic Russian Tsardom, meant the disappearance from Europe and the diplomatic world of two grand and distinguished branches of the *corps diplomatique*.

The traditional diplomacy was leisurely and polished. It had a routine which was known and used by all Christian

<sup>1</sup> Cambon, *Le Diplomate*, p. 20; cf. Guizot, *Histoire de mon Temps*, II, p. 266.

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states. Since the end of the seventeenth century many treatises, interesting, even if somewhat too reminiscent of the red-tape and formalism of the Chancelleries, have been written. Forms of address and introduction, methods of beginning and of ending a dispatch, were soon reduced to "system." This routine, which some people criticize as formal, some as being even puerile, had high value. It was part of the discipline imposed upon diplomatists. Patience and serenity were qualities which the treatises declared to be necessary for a diplomatist; the habitual adherence to a certain routine of language, of address, of conduct in relation to other people, was a guarantee against hasty words or action. Moreover, it enabled everyone to put precisely the right value upon anything that was said by a diplomatist. When President Monroe on December 2, 1823, in the now celebrated message to Congress drafted by his Secretary of State, John Quincy Adams, declared that his Government would regard the intervention of any European Power on the American continent as "the manifestation of an unfriendly disposition towards the United States," the meaning was perfectly well understood. The use of the phrase "unfriendly disposition" gave notice to the European Governments that the United States would resist them by war if they attempted to extend their possessions or political influence in North or South America. If, however, instead of employing the prescribed phrase, "unfriendly disposition," Mr. Monroe had declared that the United States, if foreign Powers behaved in a particular way, would go to war, he might have provoked the intervention which he was labouring to avoid. The language of diplomacy may often have simply covered a mailed fist with a velvet glove; but so long as forms of courtesy were preserved and naked force was not openly threatened, passion

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was restrained; the sang-froid upon which peace depends in critical negotiations was preserved. Politeness between international competitors or antagonists is not a "false" thing, any more than between people who disagree with each other in private life.

*Avec un sourire sur les lèvres et un front d'airain on passe partout,* said Talleyrand. Discipline, self-restraint, caution, and poise of manner (which became impassiveness when it was overdone) were qualities of the traditional diplomatist. So far as was possible, everything was done by writing, not by word of mouth. The written note was not likely to be expressed incautiously; it passed through several stages of drafting before its final form was reached; and it was always on record, in the original note, and in the copy which the sender retained; there could not therefore be much dispute about it. Even the so-called *note verbale* was always written; it was couched in the third person, and had no address and no signature. At the Peace Conferences of Münster and Osnabrück, which terminated the Thirty Years War in 1648, the plenipotentiaries carried on their discussions entirely by notes. In later diplomacy there was, of course, frequent conference or negotiation by conversation, but the conversation (outside social intercourse) usually took place in connection with a note presented by an ambassador to the Minister of the Court to which he was accredited. After the interview was over, each party to the conversation generally (on the British side invariably) wrote from memory a record of what had been said; but each party, naturally, refused to accept as evidence of what he had said the record of his interlocutor, unless the record had been submitted to him for confirmation. Guizot, the Foreign Minister of Louis Philippe, complained to the British Government in 1848 that Lord Normanby, the British ambassador,

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had misreported him, and had not submitted the record to him beforehand. Sir Edward Grey, British Foreign Secretary from 1906 to 1916, and M. Paul Cambon, French ambassador, could not speak, but professed to be able to understand, each other's language. In order to test the accuracy of their reports to their respective Governments, they once (and apparently once only) showed to each other their record of a conversation between them. The two records were found to agree sufficiently well to permit Grey and Cambon thenceforward to speak freely together, the one in French, the other in English, without any doubt that each would exactly understand and represent in their written record the information, explanations, and undertakings, perhaps in the event deciding the fate of untold millions and of the world, which had passed during the interview. Such incredible lack of care would never have been permitted by the traditional diplomacy, if Sir Edward Grey had been trained in it. "It is indispensable," writes a cynical Austrian diplomatist (who at any rate was not inept), "that the Envoy and Minister of Foreign Affairs understand each other clearly."<sup>1</sup> Even when Envoy and Minister understand each other's language perfectly, there is always the possibility of misrepresentation in the record which one or the other subsequently makes of their conversation for the information of his Government. M. Poincaré has declared that Isvolsky, Russian ambassador in Paris in 1912–14, was continually misleading the Russian Government by giving, in his reports, a particular "turn" or definiteness to statements made by the French statesmen in course of conversations concerning the Franco-Russian alliance and its obligations. From the Russian side, curiously, Sazonov was asserting that he had reason to complain of

<sup>1</sup> Szilassy, *Traité de Diplomatie* (1928), p. 87.

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misrepresentation in the reports sent to the Quai d'Orsay by George Louis, French ambassador at the Court of St. Petersburg.<sup>1</sup>

Great Powers paid very dearly for relaxing the routine of *diplomacy by correspondence*, or exchange of notes. Things slip out in conversation which would never appear in the written note. The terrible phrase, *just for a scrap of paper* (*Fetzen Papier*), which the honest but maladroit Chancellor Bethmann-Hollweg uttered on August 4, 1914, in his grief and excitement, to the British ambassador, Sir Edward Goschen, lost for Germany what Bismarck used to call the "imponderables," in the World War. The British ambassador naturally noted the phrase in his record, and though he did not submit the record to Bethmann-Hollweg, its occurring was never denied. Prince Bülow, who was brought up in the traditional diplomacy, and who considered Bethmann-Hollweg to be completely incompetent, says that the Chancellor should simply have denied Sir Edward Goschen's record, and then it would have been one man's word against another:—"The *no* would have weighed equally with the *yes*" (*der Negation kam der gleiche Wert zu wie der Affirmation*).<sup>2</sup>

This criticism of Bülow's would seem to imply that lying was a normal resource of diplomacy, at any rate in time of extreme need. It may be that men in authority will observe no moral restraint when the existence of their country is at stake; but when that moment arrives the conduct of affairs has passed out of the hands of diplomacy, and into the domain of force. Bethmann-Hollweg, when he uttered his unlucky phrase, was no diplomatist, and never had been one. It would be impossible for anyone trained in the discipline

<sup>1</sup> Poincaré, *Memoirs* (English trans., 1926), I, pp. 152, 166, 254.

<sup>2</sup> Bülow, *Denkwürdigkeiten*, III, p. 176 (English trans., III, p. 171).

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and habits of the traditional diplomacy to say anything unguarded, anything under the influence of passion. Lord Malmesbury, Great Britain's most accomplished professional diplomatist of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic period, wrote to a young man who was starting on the career:

It is scarcely necessary to say that no occasion, no provocation, no anxiety to rebut an unjust accusation, no idea, however tempting, of promoting the object you have in view can *need*, much less justify, a *falsehood*. Success, obtained by one, is a precarious and baseless success. Detection would ruin not only your own reputation for ever, but deeply wound the honour of your court. If, as frequently happens, an indiscreet question, which seems to require a distinct answer, is put to you abruptly by an artful minister, parry it either by treating it as an indiscreet question, or get rid of it by a grave and serious look. But on no account contradict the assertion flatly if it be true, or admit it as true if false and of a dangerous tendency.<sup>1</sup>

There is no doubt that the best diplomacy never lies; but second-class diplomatists do—those who have never seized the real meaning of the vocation. The Austrian foreign service, in the latter years of the Monarchy, had declined considerably from the standard of Metternich, Schwarzenberg, and Hübner. An Austrian diplomatist of the period of the “break-up” of the Monarchy calls lying “the legitimate defence, especially when the response is provoked by insidious questions.” He continues: “Who will, in fact, deny that a man to whom a question is put, of great importance for him, has the absolute right to give an evasive reply or flatly to contradict it, at his discretion?” This diplomatist further justifies *le mensonge* on grounds of “patriotism” (which he identifies simply with state-interest), contending that a

<sup>1</sup> Malmesbury, *Diaries and Correspondence*, IV, p. 420.

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man must not be the slave of truth, for “the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.” This is the diplomacy of suspicion and competition, and would certainly justify its champion in declaring that: “A diplomatic corps is certainly far from being a school of virtue”—*un corps diplomatique est certes loin d'être une école de vertu*.<sup>1</sup> Diplomacy of this kind was not above engaging in *espionage*, but no Foreign Office would recognize this as a regular activity. In 1893 the French Government recalled practically all the staff of the Legation at Copenhagen because the French military *attaché* had endeavoured, through the intermediary of the Princess Waldemar (*née* Princess Marie d’Orléans), to obtain secret information about Anglo-Russian relations.<sup>2</sup>

An incident which illustrates the difference between the trained and the occasional diplomatist occurred in negotiations between Louis Cobenzl, the premier Austrian career-diplomatist of the time, and Bonaparte, who had hitherto had no experience in any sort of public affairs except war. The negotiations took place at Udine in Venetia in the concluding stage of Bonaparte’s Italian campaign of 1796–7. Bonaparte was the general of a victorious army which had won every battle; but winter was approaching; his troops were far from home with insecure communications; in spite of his commanding military strength, he was anxious to make peace. The negotiations proceeded slowly, for Cobenzl, though he had no military prestige to support him, contested every step. Bonaparte on one occasion (October 11, 1797) lost his temper, stormed like a child at Cobenzl, and shouted: “You forget that you are negotiating here in the middle of my grenadiers.” If this meant anything, it would have signified

<sup>1</sup> Szilassy, *Traité*, pp. 44, 129.

<sup>2</sup> W. D’Ormesson, *Enfances Diplomatiques* (1932), p. 29.

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the most horrible piece of treachery conceivable in the history of states. It was, of course, only a stupid explosion on the part of a young general, which put him at a disadvantage, provided his opponent retained self-control. There was no difficulty in this for Cobenzl. "It was the ABC of the art, for a diplomat by profession, to remain impassive during this tempest of words."<sup>1</sup> Bonaparte finally seized his hat, dashed a porcelain vase off the table, and left the room. A similar scene occurred between Bonaparte and Lord Whitworth, British ambassador at Paris, just before the rupture of the Peace of Amiens in 1803. There was another, when Bonaparte was the Emperor Napoleon, between him and Metternich at Dresden in 1813. Napoleon had recently returned with the ruins of his *Grande Armée* from the Moscow Expedition. Half Germany had risen against him in a "War of Liberation." Austria was still nominally his ally, eager for a favourable opportunity of breaking with him and joining the German side, but finding difficulty in making the transition. It was of the highest importance for Bonaparte, the "ABC of diplomacy," to treat his unstable ally (Austria was still nominally allied to him) tactfully, to give Metternich no opportunity for saying that it was Napoleon who was breaking up their good relations. The fateful interview took place in the Marcolini Palace at Dresden, on June 26, 1813. Napoleon was excited and angry, alternately professing warm friendship and bursting out into fury. Metternich was suave and gentle, counselling concessions. "It depends on Your Majesty to give peace to the world"—which meant that Napoleon should consent to give up some of his conquests in order to obtain safety from his enemies. It was obvious

<sup>1</sup> Sorel, *L'Europe et La Révolution Française* (1903), v, p. 247. See Mowat, *The Diplomacy of Napoleon* (1924), p. 42.

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to anybody that if Napoleon did not obtain peace somehow, Austria would not compromise her interests for long by remaining on the side of the falling French tyrant. Napoleon, of course, saw the implication of Metternich's smooth and nicely calculated words, and burst forth: "My honour before all things. . . . Do you wish to rob me? . . . I will not give up one inch of ground." The Emperor stamped up and down the room, kicking his hat (which, usually kept tucked under his arm, had dropped to the floor) before him. This was more than Metternich could have hoped for, and he naturally kept his advantage by remaining perfectly quiet and polite. He could feel fairly certain after this that if Napoleon were offered reasonable but strict terms by the opposing Governments, he would indignantly refuse them, and so would give Austria the opportunity for refusing further to countenance a Power which never listened to reason.<sup>1</sup>

The industrious bureaucrat, involved in the ceaseless work of his correspondence and his office-files, is apt to look upon the diplomatist as a *dilettante*. Yet, in fact, the career of a diplomatist, if it is properly undertaken, requires a long training, high culture, exact knowledge. Count Hübner, one of Metternich's school, considered it to be perhaps the most difficult of all vocations.

What a hard trade is the diplomatist's! I know of none which demands so much abnegation, so much readiness to sacrifice one's interests for the sake of duty, so much courage. The ambassador who properly discharges his obligations, never betrays fatigue, boredom, disgust. He disguises the emotions which he feels, the temptations to succumb which assail him. He knows how to

<sup>1</sup> For Napoleon and the hat incident, see Fain, *Manuscrit de 1813* (1829), II, p. 43.

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pass over in silence the bitter deceptions which are dealt to him, as well as the unexpected satisfactions with which fortune, though rarely, rewards him. Jealous of his dignity, he never ceases to be cautious, takes care to quarrel with nobody, never loses his serenity, and in all the great crises, when the question of war arises, shows himself calm, impassive, and sure of success.<sup>1</sup>

Hübner was ambassador of Austria-Hungary at Paris when Napoleon III, at the New Year's Day reception of 1859, amid the silence of the listening throng, said distinctly: "I regret that our relations are not as good as I would desire"—*je regrette que nos rapports ne soient pas aussi bons que je désirais.*<sup>2</sup> The ambassador had need of all his self-control and serenity, for this was the warning of a war of France against Austria.

Hübner later became ambassador at the Vatican, and availed himself of the opportunities for research in the papal diplomatic archives to write a study on Pope Sixtus V. He died at Vienna in 1892 at the age of eighty-one. Another diplomatist of the Metternich school, rather earlier than Hübner, is a good instance of a diplomatist possessed of the culture, courage, and self-command which the career demands. Prokesch von Osten, Austrian ambassador at Berlin in 1850, was a historian and classical scholar. He had travelled in Greece, and had written a fine history of the Greek War of Independence. His great achievement in a long, eventful, and highly successful diplomatic career was in disregarding his instructions in November 1850. Prussian and Austrian troops were facing each other in Hesse-Cassel; negotiations were in progress at Berlin, but shots had been exchanged by the outposts of the field-armies. Prokesch had orders from his master, the formidable Austrian Chancellor, Prince Schwarzen-

<sup>1</sup> Hübner, *Neuf ans de souvenirs d'un ambassadeur*, I, p. 176.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., II, p. 244.

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berg, to demand his passports from the Prussian Government. On the other hand, the Prussian Minister President, just before he heard of the exchange of shots, had agreed to withdraw the troops. Prokesch refused to sacrifice the last chance of peace; and he abstained from asking for his passports. The peace-party in the Berlin Cabinet adhered steadily to its resolve to make a compromise; and a European war was avoided. The domineering Schwarzenberg, himself a diplomatist and a statesman, approved of his ambassador's "initiative."<sup>1</sup> Prokesch was maintained at the Berlin Embassy until 1852, when he was moved to Frankfurt, as Austrian representative and President of the Federal Diet. In 1855 he was transferred to the Constantinople Embassy; in this post he sustained and even enhanced his great reputation. Prokesch died at Vienna in 1876. The action of Prokesch in setting aside Schwarzenberg's instructions shows that the "old diplomacy" was not necessarily rigid and formalist. Mr. Nicolson has disclosed an instance of the same nature from the history of post-War diplomacy. In 1922, during the Turko-Greek War, after the Greek defeat at Afion Karahissar, Turkish troops advanced up to the barbed-wire of the Chanak Neutral Zone which was held by British troops. The British Government was prepared to defend the neutrality of Chanak by force of arms, but it preferred, of course, to negotiate the Turks away. On September 29th the Government decided to deliver an ultimatum to Mustafa Kemal to withdraw his troops from before the Neutral Zone. But General Sir Charles Harington and the High Commissioner, Sir Horace Rumbold (a professional diplomatist), decided to ignore their instructions. The ultimatum was not delivered,

<sup>1</sup> Foreign Office Papers, Prussia 321, November 27, 1850; cf. Mowat, *The States of Europe, 1815-1871* (1931), p. 183.

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and within a fortnight the Convention of Mudania was signed with full satisfaction to the British point of view. The Neutral Zones were respected.<sup>1</sup>

The "career" has attracted so much attention since it came into existence at the end of the Middle Ages, has so charmed and sometimes mystified the public, that for centuries men never tired of discussing it. Numerous counsels to diplomats have been drafted; numerous characters of the "good diplomatist" described. Talleyrand's advice to a young diplomatist—*et surtout pas trop de zèle*—contains his usual wisdom, cynicism, and humour. The forgotten Austrian diplomatist, Dumreicher, in his forgotten book, puts forward many excellent reflections on the career:

A diplomatist should have a calm temperament.

People like to attribute a certain fire (*fougue*) to genius, and to consider it as dispensed from being patient. But true genius never lacks patience, it waits always until affairs have reached maturity, and it never precipitates anything through impatient impetuosity. Because of this a proverb says: Patience is genius.

Diplomacy is good sense, applied to the affairs of the great world.

Tact is the capacity for doing spontaneously what is suitable (*convenable*).

Bülow's father, who was Secretary of State in the Prussian, and later in the Imperial Foreign Office, gave his son sensible, if not very idealistic, advice on entry into the career:<sup>2</sup>

The strictest and the most rigorous truthfulness in every report.

Report only what is certain.

Report nothing that might turn out to be unfounded later on.

Never tell fibs.

<sup>1</sup> H. Nicolson, *Curzon, The Last Phase*, p. 275.

<sup>2</sup> Bülow, *Memoirs* (trans., 1932), IV, p. 14. See Dumreicher, *Album d'un Diplomate* (1883).

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No gossip, no exaggeration or over-statement, no—over-vivid colouring.

*Ne pas forcer la note.*

Be especially meticulous with regard to figures.

*Point de fantaisie.*

Do not paint events more luridly than they present themselves to sober observation.

Care in judgment.

Seldom prophesy, in any case not in reports, at the very utmost only in private letters. Official prophets, star-gazers and fortune tellers, haruspices and augurs, no longer exist. Besides: *Tout arrive, on ne peut jurer de rien, tout change.*

Do not compromise others in your reports. It is neither decent nor clever. Do not write *ab irato*. Prince Bismarck is in the habit of saying that indignation and rancour are conceptions foreign to diplomacy. The diplomat is neither a preacher of penitence, nor a judge in a criminal court, nor a philosopher. His sole and exclusive interest must be the real and downright interest of his country.

Be careful with telegrams. Very careful with the code, which must never be used unnecessarily.

Do not criticize too severely in your reports. *La critique est aisée et l'art est difficile.* Besides the contents of every report can leak out.

Be calm and sober. *Ne prends rien au tragique, tout au sérieux,* as Thiers used to say. And, above all, take everything coolly. But always be *en vedette* and look out in all directions.

*Calm, balance, self-control. Keep up your nerves, sir.* Do not be influenced by sympathies or antipathies.

Do not transmit awkward wishes of Foreign Governments to Berlin. Leave it to the Foreign Government to make such requests through its own representatives in Berlin—they can then be refused more easily. Do not, without being empowered by the Foreign Office, take any steps that might compromise our Govern-

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ment. Remember how badly Benedetti was bitten when he made his "compensation and annexation proposals" to Bismarck.

A clear, concise style, not too long-winded; matter of fact, but not clumsy. "*Tous les genres sont bons hors les genres ennuyeux,*" said Voltaire. Germans forget it far too often.

It is a diplomat's first duty not to be taken by surprise. Politics are dominated by constant change. All things flow. Do not let your imagination run wild. Do not make an elephant out of every gnat. But look upon almost everything as possible and little as certain. Above all, don't let yourself be hurried. The deep secret of our life lies somewhere between excessive haste and lost opportunities.

The chief task of a diplomat abroad is always what Bismarck calls work on human flesh, that is to say, the correct treatment of strangers with the object of realizing tangible, factual successes. Keep in touch with colleagues and do not cower inside four walls like the were-wolf. But at the same time, don't let your colleagues tell you any lies or exploit you. *Pas trop de zèle* is a golden rule when rightly understood.

All this advice of the elder Bülow, even more than Dumreicher's, seems to savour a little too much of worldly wisdom. It must be admitted that there were bad schools, as well as good schools, of diplomacy. An Austrian diplomatist, who served in the last period of the Monarchy, contends that "force and deception governed and still govern international relations"—*c'est la force et la ruse qui régissent ces relations*. He adds, however, that there is a certain standard of decency which is observed: "It would scarcely be admitted that a state should take advantage of a physical catastrophe, such as a great earthquake, to ravage the territory of a rival." This is not pitching the standard very high; and this diplomatist declares, on another page: *La morale ne joue encore qu'un bien petit rôle dans la vie internationale d'aujourd'hui, et le patriotisme ne peut que bien rarement se conformer à ses lois.*

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Patriotism, of course, to this kind of diplomatist only means state-interest. His diplomacy is one of competition and suspicion. "We will declare, at the risk of disconcerting the enthusiasm of many, that the best diplomat is he who, inspired solely by cold reason, asks himself only what he can obtain and how he will arrive at it."<sup>1</sup>

The precepts of Dumreicher and the elder Bülow, and Talleyrand's *surtout pas trop de zèle*, would seem to make the practice of diplomacy to depend largely upon personal judgment and cleverness. Certainly, personality must always be of outstanding importance in the profession. Its routine, however, its rules, the development of international law, particularly rapid since the end of the World War, have tended to increase the scientific aspect of the career. M. de Staël, Russian ambassador at London at the end of the nineteenth century, was a man of the old school, the last inheritor, it might be said, of the Nesselrode tradition. Presiding at the opening session of the First Hague Peace Conference in 1899, M. de Staël said: "It will be permitted me to say that, obeying a general law, diplomacy is no longer an art in which personal cleverness plays an exclusive rôle; it tends to become a science which must have its fixed rules for the solution of international conflicts. This is to-day the ideal object which diplomacy should have before its eyes." There is now in the Covenant and in the structure of the League of Nations and Hague Court, in the network of conciliation and arbitration treaties concluded since the World War, and in the accumulation of precedents over the last century, a body of lore which the diplomatist must master, in addition to the routine of his profession, and the discipline which it imposes. The discipline, the self-discipline or self-control

<sup>1</sup> Szilassy, *Traité pratique de diplomatie* (1928), pp. 10, 44, 89.

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of the diplomatists, is one of their most valuable qualities. Professional diplomacy has often been called secret, but it would be more correct to call it silent. Its persistent and fruitful work of explanation and persuasion, unnoticed by the public, can be inferred from any of the series of Foreign Office papers such as *British Documents on the Origins of the War*.

Diplomatists are, after all, only human agents, subject to human imperfections. Nevertheless, the profession has always been and remains high and noble, responsive to a great demand. It arose because certain work was demanded, requiring certain moral qualities. Men who showed the wrong qualities were naturally soon discarded. Gradually the profession defined itself, adapted itself, established a technique, training, habit. If it has not attracted, like science, into its ranks the giants of intellect, it has never failed to call to it men of high purpose, of intellectual accomplishment, of critical and calm insight. Always, men respond to the demands which their profession makes on them. The military men, the physicians, the clergy, conform to the high demands of their calling, even if they fall short of the ideal. So it is with the diplomatists; peace and good relations are the inexorable demands of their profession. It exacts qualities of temper, poise, judgment, and serious application, which they seldom fail to display. Because they are, first and last, reasonable people, conciliatory, unprejudiced, humane, with the art and habit of living together as colleagues in society, they have been called "the most civilized portion of the human race."<sup>1</sup> The Duc de Broglie said that diplomacy was the best thing which civilization had yet thought of for preventing force alone from governing the relations of states.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> W. D'Ormesson, op. cit., p. 50.

<sup>2</sup> Duc Albert de Broglie in Cambon, *Le Diplomate, ad fin.*

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remarks, to the French Foreign Minister; or he may be instructed merely to read the dispatch to the Foreign Minister, or, without reading, to communicate the views of the British Government. The ambassador then reports the result to the Foreign Office. Meanwhile, the French Foreign Minister is sending his account of the interview to the French ambassador in London, with instructions to read it, or convey certain remarks, to the British Foreign Minister. Thus views are continually being exchanged between Governments or Foreign Offices, and results are being gradually achieved (often in quite minor matters like the claims of the heirs of a deceased emigrant) and international intercourse is being maintained, all of which, viewed as a whole, is of the highest importance in international relations. If these relations are carried on continuously over a long period with uniform tact, thoughtfulness, and consideration on both sides, a basis of official friendliness and a habit of mutual accommodation may be established for generations. The conduct of affairs as between the British Foreign Office and the United States Department of State, and between Lord Pauncefote, ambassador in Washington, and John Hay, Secretary of State, between 1898 and 1902, are classical instances of this.

Another method of modern diplomacy (in addition to exchange of notes or dispatches, and conversations conducted by ambassadors) is negotiation between other departments than the Foreign Offices. When the question in discussion between two states is technical and not primarily political, for instance a tariff arrangement or question of debt or currency, the negotiation may be carried up to a certain point between the officials of the ministries of commerce or finance of the two countries. Conversations preparatory to the Lausanne Conference on Reparations and Inter-Allied Debts

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were carried on at Paris in the previous month (January 1931) by Sir Frederick Leith-Ross, of the British Treasury, and M. Flandin, French Minister of Finance. Most significant development of all, perhaps, in diplomacy is the advent of direct conversations between Prime Ministers, or Prime Ministers and Presidents. Mr. MacDonald and M. Herriot had conversations with very important results, at Chequers, in the summer of 1925, before the "Dawes Plan" of Reparation Payments was submitted to the London Conference. In August 1931 M. Laval spoke over the telephone from Paris with Herr Brüning at Berlin. M. Laval also paid a visit to Herr Brüning later, and to President Hoover at Washington, visits that were not merely ceremonial but were designed for the exchange of views. Herr Brüning visited the British Prime Minister at Chequers in June 1931, and received a return visit. Signor Grandi, the Foreign Minister of Italy, went to several of the capitals of Europe and to Washington. Direct conversations of this sort, between Prime Ministers, or between Foreign Ministers, were not unknown before the World War. When sovereigns paid ceremonial visits to each other, for instance when Wilhelm II visited Queen Victoria in 1899, Ministers in Attendance took the opportunity, as they were meant to do, to engage in political conversations. Some of the Russian Foreign Ministers of the nineteenth century were noted travellers, particularly Prince Gortchakoff and M. de Giers. They frequently met their *vis-à-vis* in a foreign capital or in a fashionable spa during the late summer. In the twentieth century, however, in the years before the War, Prime Ministers and Foreign Ministers seldom, if ever, met each other. Lord Grey's memoirs, *Twenty-Five Years*, show that the British Secretary of State was averse from travelling, and that he did not do business directly with the

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Foreign Ministers of the Powers, did not know them, and was not expected to. The German Emperor William II, quite reasonably, complained to the British ambassador at Berlin that the British Cabinet Ministers, except Haldane, never came to Berlin, but were always going off to Paris. Grey's self-satisfied defence of himself against this imputation—that there was no ground of complaint against him on account of foreign visits, because "I never make any"—was not to his credit.

Since the War, things are very different. All the Prime Ministers and all the Foreign Ministers meet from time to time, either in the Council of the League of Nations, in some Conference, or merely in some specially arranged interview. The normal practice of the Council of the League is to meet in public, although it has the power to hold private sessions, and on occasion exercises this power.

This kind of diplomacy, conducted directly between Prime Ministers, Foreign Ministers, and "experts," as well as the regular "routine" diplomacy of Foreign Offices and ambassadors, has never (with the exception of League of Nations conferences) been "open" and could only be made "open" to the public with considerable reservations. When the French Minister of Foreign Affairs requests the British ambassador to call upon him for a quiet discussion of some contentious or momentous question, he certainly could not be expected to arrange for the presence of a newspaper reporter. Equally, the conversations of a high British Treasury official with a high official of the French Treasury, about currencies and bank credits, could not at the time be opened to the public. The same thing may be said of meetings of Prime Ministers. On the other hand, under the system of democracy the public have a right to more information than they receive;

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for information helps to educate the public politically, and also gives it a certain measure of responsibility for decisions for which, in fact, the public have ultimately, if things go badly, to bear the responsibility. There is, therefore, ground for suggesting that more information should be given out concerning the routine events of diplomacy, and the meetings of experts and the conversations of Prime Ministers. This could only be done, of course, after both parties to the conversations had agreed on the information which they would publish. Diplomacy must inflexibly base itself on the obligations of loyalty and tact between the negotiating parties; so that *agreed communiq  s* would have to be the system of publication normally adopted. The necessity of agreement imposes certain limitations and reserves which tend to deprive *communiq  s* of dramatic interest, or even of ordinary "news interest"; but the "dryness" of diplomatic *communiq  s* is probably due, not so much to the caution of the writers as to the fact that they do not really wish to give information but only to put off the public with some sort of empty formula. If the *communiq  s* are worth having at all they must tell more than so far they have done. It is not that the public are not interested. They could read an informing diplomatic *commiqu  *, and their interest would grow as the system developed. In time there would be in every daily newspaper a column or more devoted to diplomatic news which would progressively educate the public and stimulate intelligent discussion. Instead of being a sensation, and a somewhat nervous "feature" of newspapers, the diplomatic paragraphs would become part of the ordinary breakfast-table reading, and quiet remarks about foreign affairs would be exchanged with the toast and marmalade! One beneficent result of this would be that it would be impossible for diplomatic surprises

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to be sprung upon the public, for in the diplomatic world—a “great village” of well-informed gossip, hitherto sedulously screened from everyone outside—coming events always cast their shadows before them.

This taking of the public into confidence in the day-to-day business of diplomacy, as well as on special occasions, would be of immense advantage to the diplomatists themselves; for their training, in some respects almost perfect, is in other directions singularly lacking. The diplomatist is a great servant of the public, educated, provided with essential knowledge of history, law, and politics, bound by inclination, habit, and the discipline of the profession to work for peace, to be restrained, prudent, polite; unprejudiced as belonging to the *corps diplomatique*, in which men from any state are colleagues of each other. On the other hand, there is a danger of the diplomatist being out of touch with the public. He moves in high life, politically and socially. He knows the world of courts, and Foreign Offices, of clubs and salons. He studies politicians and Parliaments, and writes admirable reports on public affairs and public opinion in the country to which he is accredited. Nevertheless, he is socially, almost inevitably, out of touch with the ordinary man, whose prejudices he does not share, and whose ignorance he must tend to despise. If he had, within definite limits naturally, to take the public into his confidence by framing *communiqués*, seriously meant to be informing, he would at once begin to make contact with this public; to receive definite and informing impressions from it, and gradually to feel his way into the public mind, and it, in a sense, into him. A new “technique” of *communiqués* would be developed which, provided the rule that the *communiqué* must say something worth saying is observed, would become a great educating

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and informing and tranquillizing influence in public life; further, it would be a means for insuring that Governments which were agreed on doing certain things would have behind them in their own countries a strong and steady force of informed public opinion, supporting them and sharing responsibility.

There has, indeed, been very little tendency since the War to make diplomacy as conducted by exchange of notes, and by personal interviews and conversations, open in any sense to the public. In this respect post-War diplomacy is different from the old pre-War diplomacy. Perhaps the old diplomacy<sup>1</sup> was franker, for the British Government from the time of the Crimean War frequently, though not regularly, issued collections of current or recent diplomatic documents under the name of *Parliamentary Papers*, popularly styled Blue Books (those "terrible British Blue Books," as Bismarck called them). The Austrian Foreign Office, under Baron Beust, followed the example of England by issuing Red Books; the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs published Yellow Books; the Italian Government, Green Books; the Imperial German Government had a slender series of White Books. Since the War such publications have been very few.

✓ The War diplomacy, however, and the post-War diplomacy, developed the habit and method of international Conference, direct negotiation between responsible ministers of state assembled together and meeting round the same table. The "Diplomacy by Conference" of the War period was described by Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Maurice Hankey (Secretary of the British War Cabinet and of the Supreme Council of the Allies in the War) in a remarkable essay published in 1920.<sup>1</sup> Since

<sup>1</sup> *Proceedings of the British Institute of International Affairs*, No. 1, No. 2, 1920.

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the War the Conferences of Spa, Genoa, Washington, London, Paris, The Hague, and others, have taken place, and have attracted much public attention, and were conducted with some degree of publicity or "openness."—The Council of the League of Nations is almost a standing Conference, for it meets three or four times a year, and may sit for weeks at a time, and even when not in session always has an acting chairman who can summon it to meet. It holds public sessions where the business of the day is genuinely discussed, and when important questions are at issue a great deal of information is given to the Press. The effect upon the mind of civilized peoples of the publicity of the Council's handling of the Manchurian affair in the latter months of 1931 was very noticeable. The dispute was not solved, but the world was particularly well informed upon the subject, and especially upon the attitude of the two disputing parties. Naturally, the Council cannot always meet in public, and private and unofficial conversations among the members doubtless have influential results upon decisions which will be taken in public. Nevertheless, the Council remains the standing example of open diplomacy in the post-War world. The diplomatic Conferences which Governments have held outside the Council (with the exception of the Conference of Washington on Naval Disarmament) have been conducted with a very restricted measure of open diplomacy.

✓The chief objection to open diplomacy has been stated by Sir Austen Chamberlain in one of his speeches delivered when he was Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. Sir Austen pointed out that in diplomatic Conferences conducted in public, statesmen had necessarily to declare their aims and to state the position and requirements of their country. Having thus taken up a definite stand before the eyes of the whole

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world, the statesmen could not depart from their declaration, but were bound to go on insisting upon it. Thus compromise and agreement would tend to become impossible.

✓ This is a weighty statement, and describes a very real defect of open diplomacy, if conducted with the wrong technique. The adoption, however, of a definite point of view or claim in public session is just what should be avoided and would normally be avoided by trained diplomatists, or by anyone initiated in the proper technique of open diplomacy. Career-diplomatists for centuries have practised a particular code of behaviour and used a particular style of language which is perfectly "safe," and which has meanings definitely understood and allowed for. It is second nature to a diplomatist to refer to other diplomatists (who may be bitterly opposed to him) as his "colleagues"; and no international crisis would occur through a diplomatist losing his temper, or inadvertently speaking outside his instructions. A similar technique is undoubtedly growing up in the Council of the League of Nations, which is frequently attended by the same people (some of whom are career-diplomatists) and which has the services of the permanent officials of the Secretariat.

In the same way the tradition of the Council, a permanent corporation, prevents the sessions being used as platforms for stirring up feeling outside the Council. The classic instance of such a use of open diplomacy was the Conference of Brest-Litovsk, in spring, 1918, when the Bolshevik Delegation spoke, by wireless, to the whole world; but the Council of the League appears never to have been used in this way. It is a business-like conference, which already has a tradition and a technique, though not yet fully developed. Stresemann's celebrated blow of the fist on the table, in debate in the

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Council with the Polish delegates over the question of minorities, in 1928, was probably a calculated indiscretion, such as the most experienced diplomatists may on occasion allow themselves.

Conference, as a method of diplomatic procedure and settlement, whether in the Council of the League of Nations or otherwise, is now established in the world. It is the regular resource of all Governments when they are seriously looking for the solution of international questions. Apart from the greater or less degree of difficulty of the question at issue, the success of a Conference depends upon three things. The first, of course, is the temper and views of the negotiating parties; if they are calm and accommodating and fair-minded, the Conference has obviously a reasonable prospect of success. Secondly, the preparations made beforehand with a view to the Conference have a vital effect on the final course and results. Thirdly, the attitude of the public during the Conference has a very great influence on the decisions of the Conference.

These three things on which diplomatic Conferences depend for success are connected with each other. The temper and views of the participants are conditioned, to some extent, by the sort of preparations that have been made for the conference, and still more by the attitude of the public. Before a conference meets, the interested Governments must exchange views, by diplomatic methods, by public speeches, and any other means; if possible, they should reach some preliminary agreement of a general nature; in any case they must find out that they are not hopelessly at variance. Particularly, they must so far communicate with each other and co-operate beforehand as to ensure that their first definite statements at the Conference shall not establish programmes for each

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participating Government which will make agreement impossible. The success of the Congress of Berlin of 1878 was largely due to the fact that Great Britain and Russia had agreed in the previous month on their *minimum* compromise towards each other. The success of the Conference of London of 1925 (accepting the Dawes Plan of Reparations) was largely due to the conversations and arrangements with each other made by Mr. MacDonald and M. Herriot at Chequers. The failure of the Conference of Geneva on Naval Disarmament, 1926, seems to have been caused by lack of co-operative preparation by Great Britain and the United States, each party putting forward at the opening of the Conference independently drafted programmes or claims which made agreement extremely difficult, if not impossible. The failure of the World Economic Conference of 1933 was also largely due to lack of previous agreement among certain parties.

The attitude of the public both in the place where the Conference is held and throughout the civilized world is recognized by diplomats as being highly influential on the results of their deliberations. The Washington Conference, 1921-2, on Naval Disarmament and the Far East was fortunate in its public, in Washington, where social life is keen and closely in touch with politics. It was fortunate also in having a public in other countries which watched the proceedings with keen interest through the Press. A Conference held in a listless world would suffer from depression and pessimism from the start. The lack of public interest, a "bad Press," was a great drawback to the first Hague Disarmament Conference of 1899. The failure of the Disarmament Conference of Geneva of 1932-5, was not due to the place of meeting, which is ideal, nor to lack of interest on the part of public and Press, but to political causes, not all

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of them connected with the rise of National Socialism in Germany.

✓The kind of publicity given to the proceedings of a Conference is one of the things which most markedly helps to shape public opinion and interest in a favourable way. Agreement on the degree and method of publicity at the Conference ought, if possible, to be arranged before the Conference begins. In time, as experience develops in various Conferences, a "norm" of publicity will be established, although the particular circumstances of each Conference must allow to some extent for different treatment. Every Conference will have plenary sessions and sessions when it goes into committee or committees. It is the plenary sessions which offer the opportunity for admission of the public. In these sessions, general programmes will be stated and general aims; and results will be announced and explained. The essential thing is that such plenary sessions should be frequent throughout the Conference, and that they should not be merely formal. They should be regarded by the delegates as the occasion for explaining the extent to which agreement has been reached at each stage of the Conference, and of informing the public at frequent intervals of the progress of the discussions. The speeches and statements should be instructive and frank, for the time is long past when anything is to be gained by hoodwinking the public. Nothing can, in the long run, be kept from the public in these days of universal journalism, finance, wireless; the only wise course for statesmen is to keep the public judiciously and continuously in their confidence, and so to prevent surprises and crises. By such continuous instructing of the public, a steady volume of opinion and support will be created. Securely based on this support and opinion, the Conference statesmen will be able to make the

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arrangements and settlements which they are all, or nearly all, wise enough to desire, but which on their sole responsibility they feel unable to achieve.

In the summer of 1935 correspondence in *The Times*, initiated by Lord Hardinge of Penshurst (formerly Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs), criticized adversely the method of diplomacy by conference of responsible ministers. About the same time the attention of the public was particularly directed to the question by the visit of Mr. Anthony Eden, Minister of League of Nations affairs in the British Cabinet, to Signor Mussolini at Rome, early in July. Mr. Eden's mission, which involved an offer on the part of H.M. Government to cede Zeila and a "corridor" of British Somaliland to Abyssinia, was hotly criticized when made known through official *communiqués* and through debates in the House of Commons. The offer seemed to please the House of Commons as little as it pleased Signor Mussolini. Yet it was clearly worth making, for it was calculated to lead to a solution of the whole Italo-Abyssinian problem. In a highly interesting debate in the House of Commons (July 11, 1935), Mr. W. S. Churchill expressed what is probably coming to be the accepted opinion.

He did not say that there were not occasions when Ministers should not go on these missions, but he thought those occasions should be very carefully selected, and Ministers should only go abroad when they were pretty sure that the result would be to set the seal on an agreement already arrived at by the diplomats.

Yet there are occasions when there is no time for any diplomatic preparation. If the assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand at Sarajevo on June 28, 1914, had been at once followed by a meeting of the British Secretary of State

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for Foreign Affairs with the German Chancellor and the Russian, Austrian, and Serbian Foreign Ministers, the crisis of the following month would in all likelihood have taken a different course to that which the world mourns to-day. How fortunately otherwise were the conditions when Herr Hitler suddenly announced German rearmament in April 1935! At once the responsible ministers of the Great Powers conferred, carried on the wings of the plane from London to Paris, Berlin, Moscow, Warsaw, Prague. Here, surely, is the convincing justification of these much-criticized "comings and goings" of ministers of State.

## CHAPTER V

### THE INTERNATIONAL OF MONARCHS

WHEN every great European state was a monarchy, the "monarchical principle" was of extreme importance in diplomacy and international affairs. Monarchs did not sign treaties, nor as a rule did they participate in the detailed negotiations leading to treaties. Nevertheless, they had a great deal to do with the transaction of international affairs, and they represented one of the most interesting aspects of diplomacy, its solidarity or cosmopolitanism.

In the course of the nineteenth century the monarchs, except in Russia, lost, in a greater or less degree, the control of domestic policy. They retained, however, much of their influence in foreign policy. There were good reasons for this. Every monarch, in addition to his national position, had an international position. He was a travelled man; he had relatives in the royal families of other states; he belonged in fact to the international caste of monarchs. All aristocracy has a cosmopolitan aspect, and monarchs were the highest aristocracy, so far removed from the rest of mankind, so unique in their privileges, that they inevitably developed a strong fellow-feeling for each other. To read the private correspondence of monarchs is to realize that they lived in a lofty and rare atmosphere, from which they looked down upon the errors and passions of their people, and, indeed, necessarily gave way to them, yet all the time took it for granted that it was the monarchs who really mattered and that their interests, privileges, duties, and aims were all fundamentally common to the whole monarchical caste.

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Monarchs, it has been said, were neither better nor worse than the rest of mankind, only different. Besides their acquaintance and kinship with each other, and their frequent visits, public and private, monarchs had another advantage for the transaction of diplomatic affairs, in their long experience and permanent position. Ministers came and went, but monarchs held their place for life; and therefore, more especially as their training and habits inclined them to take an active interest in diplomacy, they accumulated experience and influence, and handed some of all this on to their successors as part of the monarchical tradition. It is always a good thing that the Foreign Ministers of states should be experienced men, versed in the procedure of negotiations, and well acquainted with each other. With the growth of nationalism and democracy, however, the Foreign Ministers of the states tended to see less of each other, and to know little of each other. The monarchs, still serenely exempt from the chances and changes of democratic politics, continued to visit, converse, correspond with each other, and often to exert the peaceful influence which comes with mutual understanding.

The visits of state which monarchs made to each other are chronicled in history. It is not always realized, however, that unofficial visits frequently took place, when the monarchs and their relatives threw aside the parade, the restraints, the "solemn plausibilities" of public life, and lived their own life in the private cosmopolitan domestic circle. The princes and princesses of the Russian royal family made annual visits to their relatives at Copenhagen or at Oldenburg or at Darmstadt or Stuttgart. The Bavarian royal family would take a holiday at Vienna with their relative the Empress. Queen Victoria's highland home, Balmoral, or her sea-side mansion at Osborne, had innumerable royal guests. Her letters, and

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those of the Emperor William II to the Tsar, show how frequent and intimate was the correspondence of monarchs—though not of *all* monarchs—with each other. Coburg was a *rendez-vous* for the many princes of the far-scattered and powerful Coburg line. Glimpses of the private life of the European monarchical circle may be had from a study of the court of King Christian IX of Denmark, called the Grandfather of Europe. One of his daughters was Queen Alexandra of England, another was the Empress Feodorovna of Russia. A son was King George of Greece. Most other royal houses had some relationship to him. At Petrograd or Moscow court-life was sumptuous, elaborate, bizarre. The dinners were magnificent, terrific, incredible. The *menus* have been preserved; “one seemed to be dreaming in enumerating that litany of *entrées*, *rôtis*, *volailles*, and *sucreries*.<sup>1</sup> At Copenhagen, naturally, life was much simpler. It is said that Prince John, the king’s brother, would himself open the door. The princesses made their own trousseaux. The Empress of Russia and the Queen of England on visit to the family home fell back into their old habits and sewed caps for themselves. When the family-party took its holiday in the king’s country-house, Frederiksborg, each monarch pinned a visiting card on the door of his bedroom to show who was in it. The furnishings of these rooms were simple enough; the Tsar had a room with a deal table, one armchair, and three ordinary chairs.<sup>2</sup>

Thus monarchs had always a double political interest: their interest in, and their obligations to, their own ministers, Parliaments, and peoples; and their interest in each other, and their obligations to the monarchical caste. They accepted

<sup>1</sup> W. D’Ormesson, *Enfances diplomatiques*, p. 17.

<sup>2</sup> W. D’Ormesson, op. cit., pp. 26–7.

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a reciprocal responsibility for the peace of Europe, as may be seen in the celebrated and still much-discussed "incident" of 1875. In May of that year the relations between the German Empire and the French Republic (always strained since 1871) had become particularly tense; and it was believed in many quarters that Bismarck was determined to bring on immediate war with France—a "preventive war" to anticipate a future recovery of France and an attack upon Germany. The French Government was thoroughly alarmed and it communicated its apprehensions in urgent terms to the European courts. These, though not interested in the welfare of republicanism, were interested in European peace; and the readiest means to ensure peace seemed to be direct communication between the monarchs. Queen Victoria wrote personally to the Emperor William I. The Tsar Alexander II of Russia, as it happened, was on his way to visit his relative, the King of Würtemberg, and he took the opportunity to stop at Berlin, and to speak with the Emperor William. The crisis passed peacefully away, amid loud, if not very explicit, complaints from Bismarck that there had never been any thought of war on his part, and that the interference of the monarchs was wholly unnecessary.

The interventions and visits of the Emperor William II are now well known. He was an incessant traveller, fond of politics, fond of sport, sociable, approachable, conversational. The long and active correspondence between him and the Tsar—carried on, by both sides, in English—has been published; it is all concerned with political affairs.<sup>1</sup> He cruised every year in the Baltic; he frequently raced his yacht in the Cowes regatta. He shot with the Habsburg princes in Bohemia or

<sup>1</sup> *The Kaiser's Letters to the Tsar* (ed. Grant, 1920), sometimes called "The Willy-Nicky Correspondence."

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in Hungary. He met the King of Spain at Vigo; his sister was Crown Princess and ultimately Queen of Greece. He had a palace at Corfu, on Greek territory. When Great Britain was engaged in the Boer War he sent to Queen Victoria advice for conducting the campaign, and to Prince Edward counsel for the time of making peace. On the whole, he is not a very favourable instance of royal diplomacy, for in spite of good intentions and good nature his interventions were apt to be brusque and tactless, so that friction seems often to have been the only result.

The British and the German monarchs were somewhat antipathetic in character to each other. Edward VII, the uncle, was a sensible, intelligent man of the world. William II, the nephew, was rather fantastic, impulsive, incalculable, although well meaning and well informed. He had also a pietistic or puritanical element in his character, which was probably not congenial to Edward VII. The expressions in which William conveyed his advice (February 4, 1900) to Edward to reconcile himself to an unfavourable peace with the Boers were scarcely diplomatic: "Even the strongest football-club when, in spite of the bravest defence, it is beaten, ultimately accepts its defeat with equanimity." Edward replied that he was "unable to share" the Kaiser's view on the analogy between the conflict with the Boers and a game. "The British Empire," he added, "is now fighting for its very existence, as you know full well."<sup>1</sup> In the difficult and tragic period of Anglo-German tension from 1898 to 1914 the "monarchical international" cannot be said to have functioned very effectively.

The monarchical international was most needed in the terrible Twelve Days, July 23–August 3, 1914. By this time,

<sup>1</sup> *Die Grosse Politik der Europäischen Kabinette*, XV, pp. 553–8.

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however, the power to influence foreign affairs or to inaugurate decisive diplomatic steps had passed almost completely out of the monarchs' hands. The Emperor Francis Joseph was so far stricken in years that he appears to have had absolutely no influence at all in the crisis. The Tsar Nicholas II had still sufficient legal power, but not sufficient strength of character, although, as a matter of fact, he made, on July 29, 1914, a proposal by telegram to William II for reference of the "Austro-Serbian problem" to the Hague Tribunal. The Emperor William II was influential in his own Government at the beginning of the crisis between June 28th (the murder of the Archduke) and July 6th (the date of the German promise of support to Austria); after this, and for all the rest of the War, he seems to have surrendered himself helplessly into the hands of his General Staff. King George V of Great Britain, as a Constitutional monarch, could only act on the advice of his ministry, and naturally left all diplomatic steps to be taken by the Foreign Office. The monarchical international had broken down. During the nineteenth century it had helped to keep Europe at peace. The system of "balance of power" was possible then because Europe was largely dominated by a few great monarchies with a stable and known policy, and with the habit of intercommunication.<sup>1</sup>

Monarchy, as an effective system, and even as a convenient device for rounding off the Governmental machine, has been given up by most European states; and in the states where it survives it no longer takes anything more than a purely ceremonial part in diplomacy. The prevailing nationalism of all states has fixed its shackles on the monarchs and robbed them of their cosmopolitan character. The European system

<sup>1</sup> Cf. G. Ferrero, *La Disparition du Système monarchique* in *L'Esprit International*, January 29, 1929, p. 18.

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of states lost something by this change. The World War destroyed the Concert of Europe and banished for ever the idea of an "international of monarchs." Something had to be put in the place of these things; the League of Nations was made and put into the vacant place.

Nothing proves more completely how far Europe had lost its historic sense than the general scepticism in the midst of which the League of Nations was established ten years ago. If Europe had only known that throughout the whole nineteenth century it had been a living unity, thanks to the institution of monarchy with an international character, it would have understood in 1919 that it was necessary to replace that institution, ruined by the World War, by a new institution for performing the same function. It would have understood that without this institution the relations between the European states would have become a chaos after the disappearance of the monarchies; that it would not have any longer the possibility of making treaties, of coming to mutual understandings, of giving a reasonable basis of confidence to international relations. It would have realized that the League of Nations, or a similar institution, was the first requisite for peace, the point of departure and of support of all treaties; and it would not have left to an American statesman the glory of discovering the thing that Europe needed. For while the League of Nations can be of service to all the countries of the world, it is above all things a necessity for Europe.<sup>1</sup>

This passage somewhat exaggerates the diplomatic aspect of monarchies, for after all presidentially governed states made treaties, and could establish a system of concert among themselves, although, perhaps, not so easily as monarchical states. Certain it is that monarchs, with their habits of mutual and restrained intercourse, their long experience, and their

<sup>1</sup> Ferrero, op. cit., in *L'Esprit International*, January 1929, p. 24.

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independent position, did in the nineteenth century have an important influence on diplomacy and international relations. The question may be asked, were they wise? The Holy Alliance of Monarchs, which existed from 1815 for fifteen or twenty years, has been often criticized unfavourably, but it helped to prevent European war. Bismarck's League of the Three Emperors (1872-87) certainly made for stability in Central and Eastern Europe. It is known, too, that the two great secret alliances which in the long run had a good deal to do with bringing about the World War were entered into with hesitation and, indeed, with resistance by two experienced monarchs. The old Emperor William I fought hard against Bismarck's plan for an Austro-German Alliance, made in 1879; and Alexander III only entered into a Franco-Russian Alliance in 1894 after prolonged delays and consideration. King Edward VII of Great Britain certainly seems to have been favourable to the making of the Entente of Great Britain, France, and Russia, but it was an Entente with limited and precise obligations, extended later by the responsible ministers into an Entente with a much wider and more dangerous, though unwritten, obligation. On the whole, wherever their judgment can be tested, the monarchs of the Great Powers showed themselves rather more cautious, rather better at estimating the feelings and ambitions of other peoples, than many of the constitutional ministers who displaced them.

They had, too, one particular advantage not enjoyed by Ministers of State: they could talk or write privately to each other in a way in which it is impossible for Ministers of State to do. Mr. Gladstone's opinion of the influence of Queen Victoria was: 'Personal and domestic relations with the ruling families abroad give openings, in delicate cases, for saying more, and saying it at once more gently and more

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efficaciously than could be ventured in the more formal correspondence and under contacts of Governments."<sup>1</sup> Dictators, as Mr. Baldwin once declared in the House of Commons, are notoriously difficult to get in touch with. It may be rather easier to make contact with democratic Presidents, Prime Ministers, and Foreign Ministers; but, obviously, language has to be very carefully measured with them. The domestic relationships between Royal Families made conversation on state matters simple and generally safe. On the other hand, there were dangers in this royal circle. The personal relations between the Emperor William II and King Edward VII reacted unfavourably on the relations between Germany and Great Britain. Queen Victoria had been apprehensive of this when she wrote to Lord Salisbury in 1888, *à propos* of the young Emperor and the Prince of Wales: "As regards the political relations of the two Governments, the Queen quite agrees that that should not be affected (if possible) by these miserable personal quarrels; but the Queen much *fears* that, with such a hot-headed, conceited, and wrong-headed young man, devoid of all feeling, this may at any moment become *impossible*."<sup>2</sup>

Queen Victoria's fears were to some extent realized, although it would be easy to exaggerate the political effect of the estrangement between the royal nephew and uncle. On the whole, the relationship between the monarchs of Europe, since the time of the Holy Alliance of 1815, were peaceful and stabilizing influences, and in the latter half of the nineteenth century, at any rate, they were never an obstacle to political progress.

<sup>1</sup> Gladstone, *Gleanings*, I, p. 41 (quoted by Frank Hardie, *The Political Influence of Queen Victoria* (1935), p. 145).

<sup>2</sup> *Queen Victoria's Letters*, VII, p. 441. For the whole question as arising out of Queen Victoria's relationships, see Frank Hardie, *ibid.*, pp. 144-73.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE WAR AFTER THE WAR

THERE is no doubt that the treaties of 1919, in contrast with the treaties of 1815, did not make a peace-settlement. Hostilities with shot and shell ceased, but another kind of hostilities was continued or inaugurated; and while this at first was directed against Germany, it later became a sort of international civil war, every nation, under the motive of economic defence, ruthlessly suppressing the foreign trade of its neighbours.

The War of 1914-18 was, on all sides, the most frightful struggle known to history. It aroused the most naked passions of hatred while it was going on, and it left the most implacable feelings behind. The treaty, accordingly, which was imposed upon Germany was not a genuine peace-treaty, but embodied provisions for a continuation of pressure on Germany by other means than shell or gas. These provisions were concerned with armaments, reparations, and trade; and they were such as to hamper, and sometimes to nullify, the other side of the treaty, the genuine and grand peace-effort embodied in the Covenant of the League of Nations.

Thus there have been two tendencies at work since the end of the World War; one, the peace-tendency, or movement for international co-operation. This has been sustained, with the imperfections due to human nature, by the League of Nations; and it is represented also by the normal activities of the diplomatists, in so far as their aim, even when it is purely national, is, as they see it, always an aim at peace. The second tendency or movement is generally called

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nationalism, which appears greatly to have increased in intensity since the War. It is, however, something more than nationalism or race-assertiveness. It is an actual dislike of the foreigner, a hatred of foreign competition in any form, a doctrine both of selfishness and repulsion. Since the War, nationalism appears to have taken the form of complete indifference to a neighbour-state's fate, and, more than that, of active effort to injure the neighbour. Nationalism has become a gospel of selfishness and hate, in sharp contrast to the international movement which is bred on a doctrine, not perhaps of love, but of tolerance and co-operation. In addition, there is a third movement, the Communist, which is in theory international, but which, as expressed in Russia, at any rate in the first ten years of Communist rule, took the form of highly exclusive and sometimes aggressive nationalism. Communism is professed by only one state. Most of the other states of the world (and now also Russia) are members of the League of Nations; and all of them profess sympathy with its ideals and do, from time to time, take a share in its work. Nevertheless, they have all, to a greater or less degree, engaged in a struggle with each other which they have waged by means of economic, financial, and various administrative means.

The war after the War began at the Peace Conference of Paris of 1919, where a very different condition of affairs prevailed from that of the peace-conferences of Paris and Vienna of a century before. The Allies believed that Germany was responsible for the whole ghastly tragedy of the previous four and a half years; and, certainly, Germany must bear a considerable share of the responsibility. The negotiations at Paris, however, were directed, for the most part, not by a lofty conception of justice to be apportioned to guilt and responsibility, but by hate. This hate had inevitably been

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engendered in the frightful conditions of the War, in the brutalities, cruelties, and widespread irreparable losses of a contest which early developed into a struggle literally for the existence of great states—a unique feature in modern wars. Previous wars had been waged for definite objectives; this was the first war in which the contending states (though not at first) developed a fierce desire to destroy each other completely. This desire was never acknowledged, and was not consciously realized, but it was bred in the mind of masses of people by the length and awful conditions of the struggle. The Duke of Wellington, in a celebrated speech delivered in the House of Lords in 1829, declared as the result of his experience that civil war was the worst of all wars. The war of 1914–18 was really a civil war in the European "system," a murderous struggle of the enlightened, Christian states of Europe, of the leaders of civilization, against each other. It was fought with all the cruelty and more than the passionateness of the Thirty Years War, which, however, ended in "stalemate," and therefore in a peace of mutual tolerance. In the twentieth-century struggle, Governments were able to keep their heroic and tortured peoples in the fight until one side was completely beaten, though by the smallest of margins. With one side lying at the mercy of the other, hate (which would have dominated the settlement equally, probably far more, if the other side had won) entered into its own. Even high statesmen were not entirely immune from it.

There is a sharp contrast between the Peace Conferences of Paris, 1814 and 1919. At the first Conference, April–May 1814, which ended the Napoleonic War, Talleyrand, Foreign Minister of the new French Government (and once Napoleon's Minister), sat in his own dignified house in the Rue Saint

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Florentin and discussed terms with the Emperor of Russia. "It was here," he used to say in his *salon* in later years, "that the Restoration was made."<sup>1</sup> No German was invited and none gained admission to the Peace Conference of Paris of 1919; but when the Treaty had been drafted by the Allies, German delegates (like Talleyrand, ministers not of the belligerent, but of a new Government) were admitted to Versailles (not to Paris), were presented with the draft (on May 7th), and were allowed to offer observations on it, in writing. There was no oral discussion. General Smuts, who criticized certain terms in the draft Treaty, proposed in writing, to Mr. Lloyd George, that a meeting and discussion should be permitted. This proposal was not accepted.<sup>2</sup> The draft Treaty which the German delegation was given to study was the longest and most complicated that was ever made; and the German observations could scarcely be compressed into a document of some hundred and thirty printed pages. All this—the study of the Treaty and the writing of the observations—had to be accomplished by the German delegates in nine days. The Allies, through M. Clemenceau, answered in writing on June 16th, with a memorandum and a letter stating: "The Allied and Associated Powers must make it clear that this letter and the memorandum attached constitute their last word."<sup>3</sup> The German delegates were given five days within which to make a declaration that they would sign the treaty. In default of such a declaration, M. Clemenceau's letter of June 16th was to be taken as a notification of the termination of the Armistice. Thus the Treaty of Versailles was a dictated, not a negotiated peace.

<sup>1</sup> Houssaye, *Les Cent Yours* (1899), p. 129.

<sup>2</sup> Text of Smuts letter, May 22, 1919, in Baker, *Woodrow Wilson and the World Settlement*, III, pp. 458-65.

<sup>3</sup> Printed in *International Conciliation*, November 1919, p. 1351.

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A treaty negotiated in this unprecedented way could scarcely fail to have grave defects and was bound, being frankly punitive, to be followed by a longer period of inflammation than is inevitable after any treaty at the end of a lost war. A dictated peace is not *necessarily* a bad peace; but unlimited power to impose conditions on the vanquished is likely to lead the victors beyond the limits of moderation. The Allies and the Germans had accepted the Fourteen Points as the basis of peace-terms, but there was room for considerable difference of opinion in regard to the application of some of these points.

Part V, Articles 159–213, the limitation of German armaments, are the best part of the Treaty of Versailles. Limitation was expressed in three ways: (1) by establishing a definite figure for *personnel* and *matériel*; (2) by the abolition of conscription, in favour of voluntary long service; and (3) by the prohibition of certain types of armaments—heavy guns, gas, aeroplanes, submarines. The Articles are models of disarmament regulations; and they were preceded by a declaration, embodied in the Treaty, to the effect that they were intended as models for the rest of the world; from the scope of this declaration the signing-parties at any rate could not escape.

In order to render possible the initiation of a general limitation of the armaments of all nations, Germany undertakes strictly to observe the military, naval, and air clauses which follow.

That the Allies recognized themselves to be bound by the declaration in a contract with Germany to follow her along the line of disarmament is explicitly confirmed by the Reply of the Allied and Associated Powers to the observations of the German Delegates on the conditions of Peace, June 16, 1919:

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The Allied and Associated Powers wish to make it clear that their requirements in regard to German armaments were not made solely with the object of rendering it impossible for Germany to resume her policy of military aggression. They are also the first steps towards that general reduction and limitation of armaments which they seek to bring about as one of the most fruitful preventives of war, and which it will be one of the first duties of the League of Nations to promote.

Failure on the part of the Allies to reduce their armaments, not necessarily to the German level, but to a degree reasonably approximating to this (taking into consideration their geographical situation towards other states), could justly be regarded by the Germans as a breach of the Treaty, and therefore as releasing them from the obligations at any rate of Part V. This is the view expressed by Herr Hitler in his Reichstag speech of May 21, 1935: "It was not Germany who broke a contractual obligation which had been laid upon her, but those states which had compelled us to adopt this independent action." It would appear that the British Government accepted this view when a few weeks after Herr Hitler's speech it made the Anglo-German Naval Agreement. For the Allies to maintain armaments on the grand scale while they kept Germany practically defenceless was to substitute force as the permanent condition of relations between states, in place of law and diplomacy; it was really continuing a war after the War. ~

The territorial clauses of the Treaty of Versailles were not based on the idea of a war after the War, though they provided opportunities for this. They were based on the principles of nationality and of historic right; and in regard to the minor cessions which Germany had to make, though not in Alsace-Lorraine or Poland, plebiscites were held. In

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the circumstances, the territorial cessions were inevitable, and were expected by all parties to the Treaty. The effort to maintain war-conditions after the War was made in the discussions among the Allies on the draft territorial clauses. Foch, and the French General Staff, demanded the Rhine frontier as a means of military security. The possession by France of the Rhine frontier north of Alsace would not merely have increased France's superiority of power over Germany, but would have provided a centre of political inflammation for ever. M. Clemenceau fought against the demand of Foch with all his might and won. The persistence with which the French military men sought the Rhine frontier is shown by the "Palatinate" episode of 1923, when a revolution, supported by certain French military circles, endeavoured to establish a separate Rhineland Republic. The Rhineland Separation Movement, however, was only a passing phase. The most serious effects of the changes in the frontiers of Germany were the opportunities provided by transfers of territory for the erection of new tariff barriers against German trade, and for unsympathetic treatment of German minorities placed under alien rule. If the new frontiers had been made "invisible" by free trade being permitted across them in both directions, and by minorities being left entirely free to maintain their old culture, political inflammation would not have arisen.

The Reparation and Economic clauses of the Treaty of Versailles were the chief means, though not designed for this purpose, of maintaining the war after the War. In two respects Part VIII ("Reparation") of the Treaty of Versailles appears to be incompatible with the pre-Armistice agreement, that is, with the terms upon which Germany surrendered on November 11th. These terms were comprehended in the

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Fourteen Points and in a reservation made by the Allied Premiers in their Note to Mr. Wilson dated November 5, 1918, and communicated to the German Government on the same date. This Note stated that: "Compensation will be made by Germany for all damage done to the civilian population of the Allies and their property by the aggression of Germany by land, by sea, and from the air." Accordingly it would seem contrary to this condition of the pre-Armistice agreement that Article 231 of the Treaty of Versailles should make Germany and her Allies acknowledge responsibility *for all the loss and damage to which the Allied and Associated Governments and their nationals have been subjected;* for the Note of November 5th only entitled the Allies to demand compensation for damage to civilians. And although, in point of fact, the Allies by the next Article, No. 232, demanded only compensation for damage to civilian population, yet they did not accept this limitation as a thing which Germany could claim as of right, but because "the Allied and Associated Governments recognize that the resources of Germany are not adequate . . . to make complete reparation." Article 232 states that the Allies waived their claims for restitution of the whole cost of the War (which by the pre-Armistice agreement they were not entitled to demand), and that they confined their demand to "compensation for all damage done to the civilian population and their property." The Treaty specifically included in "damage to the civilian population" the cost of war-pensions and separation allowances, on the ground that the Allied soldiers on whose account such charges had been incurred were civilians brought into the army by Germany's aggressive war. This interpretation of the word "civilian" to include all the citizens mobilized after the opening of the War was almost certainly not what was

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understood by "civilian" when the pre-Armistice agreement was made on November 5, 1918.

Article 233 enacted that: "the amount of the above damage for which compensation is to be made by Germany shall be determined by an Inter-Allied Commission, to be called the Reparation Commission." This Commission was really a court, charged with the responsibility of deciding all claims which were sent in to it, and of assessing the amount of compensation; but the Treaty specified absolutely the classes of damage for which claims could be made. Germany had no member on the Commission, but in all cases German representatives were to be given "a just opportunity to be heard." As the United States did not sign the Treaty, it sent no member to the Reparation Commission, which therefore consisted of a French, British, Italian, and Japanese member, Belgium and the Serbo-Croat-Slovene state (Yugoslavia); but the last three were only to sit in matters affecting their interest. Generally, therefore, the Commission sat with only the French, British, Italian, and Belgian members. Except in certain specified classes of case, questions were to be decided by a vote of the majority. Questions of interpretation of the "reparation" part of the Treaty required voting by unanimity. In case of voluntary default by Germany, the Allies could take means which Germany must not regard as acts of war, including economic and financial prohibitions and reprisals, "and in general such other measures as the respective Governments may determine to be necessary in the circumstances."

The effect of the Reparation clauses of the Treaty and of the interpretation put upon it by the Allied Governments, was to make a bill against Germany which kept her continuously at their mercy under penalty of "voluntary default." This was not the intention of the Treaty. The Reparation

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Commission was bound (Article 234) to take into consideration Germany's "resources and capacity," but it had no power to cancel any part of the due payments. As the categories of damage (including pensions and separation allowances on account of all mobilized persons) were definitely established in the Treaty, the sum to be assessed by the Commission was bound to be of extraordinary magnitude. It was assessed in 1921 at £6,600,000,000 or 132 milliards of gold marks. The result was that after hovering on the brink of default for three years, Germany at last incurred a majority vote of "voluntary default" on December 26, 1922, and had to submit to the occupation of the Ruhr.

The commercial clauses of the Treaty had the effect of accentuating the atmosphere of conflict after the War. They were probably not intended to be vindictive, although a highly intelligent and observant soldier declares roundly that they were. "No sooner was the Armistice signed, than the delirium of the War was carried into the Peace Treaties, not on the haphazard system devised during the War, but on a planned system in which the victors set out systematically to destroy the vanquished by strangling them economically."<sup>1</sup> Germany was bound to make over all her merchant ships over 1,600 tons, as part of her reparation-payments in kind. This provision, naturally, was a blow at her maritime commerce. No objection could be taken to the Article (No. 264) forbidding Germany to levy higher duties on the goods of the Allies than she levied on the goods of any other foreign state. On the other hand, Article 268, ensuring export into Germany, free of duty, over a period of five years, for the produce of Alsace and Lorraine, opened up a "hole in the

<sup>1</sup> Major-General J. F. C. Fuller in *The Nineteenth Century*, April 1934, p. 400.

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west," which in the long run intensified the tariff relations of France and Germany. A real tariff-war was instituted in 1923, when, as a reprisal for German default in reparation-payments, the German customs zone was pushed back to the eastern boundary of the Occupied Territory, so that duties could be collected by the Allied officials on every article going into or coming out of the whole Rhineland. This extraordinary customs zone was withdrawn in 1924. The loss of the German colonies, converted into "mandated" territory, was not meant to be a blow at German overseas trade, for mandates were to be a trust for all the world. In fact, however, as they issued from the Treaty of Versailles, only "B" mandates were trusts with trade bound to be administered on equal terms for the good of all peoples. "C" mandates, which cover certain former German colonies, permit these territories to be "administered under the laws of the Mandatory as integral portions of its territory." In effect, this has resulted in the inclusion of the former German South West Africa, New Guinea, and Samoa within the national protectionist tariff of the Union of South Africa, of Australia, and of New Zealand. Thus the blockade and conquest of certain of the German colonies, carried into effect during the World War, has been since then continuously maintained.

The military clauses of the Treaty of Versailles were drawn up with the sincere and justified aim of preventing the recurrence of German military domination in the politics of Europe such as had existed before the World War; and of inaugurating a general and equitable reduction of armaments among all the states of the world. The preamble of Part V of the Peace Treaty (already quoted) specifically declared this: "In order to render possible the initiation of a general limitation of the armaments of all nations. . . ."

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In the meantime, until this general limitation of armaments could be made, Germany was obviously at the mercy of her former enemies, just as completely as she was in the period between the Armistice-surrender of November 11, 1918, and the signature of the Peace Treaty on June 28, 1919. During this period, from the Armistice to the Treaty of Versailles, Germany and the Allies were still legally at war, though hostilities were suspended. The continuance of the disarmament of Germany and the high armament of the Allies after June 28, 1919, was, in effect, a maintenance of war after the War. The invasion and occupation of the Ruhr area by French troops (as well as the previous extension of the Rhineland occupied area by the seizure of Frankfurt and Wiesbaden) shows how completely Germany was at France's mercy, and how war (though bound by the Treaty not to be called war) was still going on in the long years after the signature of peace. ✓

It would be idle to attempt to apportion the blame for this war after the War. The World War, like every other, inevitably ended amid feelings of intense hostility; and the Peace Treaty could not escape being framed in a way which enabled it to be interpreted, on occasion, in a sense hostile to Germany. On the other hand, a number of circumstances—the unforeseeableness of the future, the complexity of the matters dealt with—gave to many of the clauses of the Treaty a width and elasticity which admit of generous interpretation. The territorial clauses, the specific alterations of frontier, obviously cannot be changed without revision of the Treaty; but, in view of the vested interests on either side of the frontiers, it is probably for the good of Europe that the territorial clauses should not be altered, at any rate not substantially. The other conditions of the Treaty, in so far

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as they press heavily upon Germany, can be adjusted and ameliorated within the framework of the Treaty itself, without any revision of the text, and therefore without change to its stability. The period of Allied military occupation of the Rhineland, which could have been extended beyond the year 1935, was reduced to the year 1930. Reparation payments, to which no definite figure either of amount or time was assigned in the Treaty, have been assessed, reassessed, revised, suspended, and finally abolished within the framework of the Treaty.<sup>1</sup> Colonial mandates could be revised and redistributed; commercial clauses could, in their application, be varied. Only the disarmament conditions, among the really galling servitudes, are definitely and unalterably inscribed in the text of the Treaty; but they could have been made perfectly innocuous if the other signatories of the Treaty besides Germany had adopted similar restrictions—a proceeding which the Treaty not merely authorized them, but obliged them, to undertake.

And now Part V (Reduction of Armaments) of the Treaty of Versailles is dead. The Anglo-German Naval Agreement of June 1935 is the first of a number of international agreements which are bound to take this Part's place. The territorial clauses, however (Part II of the Treaty of Versailles), and the clauses demilitarizing the Rhineland, are "alive." For they were not merely accepted by Germany in the "dictated" Treaty of Versailles, but more freely reaffirmed, partly explicitly, partly implicitly, in the Treaty of Locarno, 1925. "In a real sense the Locarno settlement was the true peace treaty that marked the end of the War by an agreed peace."<sup>2</sup> This is the message of Herr Hitler's "Thirteen

<sup>1</sup> It is true that the Convention of Lausanne, July 8, 1932, suppressing Reparation payments subject to a final capital payment of £150 million, has not been ratified, but nobody believes that Reparations will be revived.

<sup>2</sup> R. T. Clark, *The Fall of the German Republic* (1935), p. 167.

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Points," stated in his speech to the Reichstag on May 21, 1935. After declaring that the German Government had renounced those articles of the Treaty of Versailles (Part V) which, he alleged, were now invalid because they had been interpreted by the other Powers in a sense discriminatory to Germany, he continued:

The German Government will therefore unconditionally respect the articles concerning the mutual relations of the nations in other respects, including the Territorial provisions, and those revisions which shall be rendered necessary in the course of time will be put into effect only by the method of peaceful understandings.

In particular they will uphold and fulfil all obligations arising out of the Locarno Treaty, so long as the other partners are on their side ready to stand by that pact. In respecting the demilitarized zone the German Government consider their action as a contribution to the appeasement of Europe, which contribution is of an unheard-of hardness for a sovereign state.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Points 2 and 3 of the Thirteen Points. Speech delivered in the Reichstag by the Führer and Chancellor, May 21, 1935.

## CHAPTER VII

### MILITARY MEN AS DIPLOMATISTS

In the Middle Ages, when military men in the “feudal system” performed many other kinds of public work, they did little negotiating. This work was usually given to a “clerk” to perform, a bishop, perhaps, aided by his chaplains or clerks of the King’s Chancery. When, in the fifteenth century, the diplomatic profession began to take definite shape, it was quite distinct from the military; and the distinction has been continually maintained.

Obviously the conditions of training, the types of mind, the qualities required, are not the same in the two professions. Military men are not, as a class, warlike, but they are always necessarily prepared to fight. The diplomatist prepares only for peace. When war comes, affairs pass out of his hands; he has nothing more to do. It may be that he goes so far as to ignore the war which is already on the horizon. “Diplomatists,” wrote Sir Fairfax Cartwright, who was an observant British minister at Munich in the early twentieth century, “will go on talking about peace until the very moment when the guns start firing.” The military men, on their side, are perhaps a little apt to overstate the degree of necessity for defences. In 1892 there were certain small posts on the northern shore of the Red Sea, in temporary occupation of Egypt, which the Turks claimed should be given back to them. The military advisers of Sir Evelyn Baring (Lord Cromer) were doubtful. Lord Salisbury, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, wrote to Sir Evelyn:

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I would not be too much impressed by what the soldiers tell you about the strategic importance of these places. If they were allowed full scope they would insist on the importance of garrisoning the moon in order to protect us from Mars.<sup>1</sup>

The militarist General, Sir Henry Wilson, quoted in his diary a remark which the "Tiger," Clemenceau, made at the Peace Conference in May 1919 about the difference between soldiers and civilians ("Frocks"). "Tiger said soldiers were always making wars whereas Frocks make peace."<sup>2</sup> On their side, if military men are not particularly suited for diplomatic work, it must also be borne in mind that they do not desire it. They recognize their own qualities and the limitations of these qualities, and they are content with their own duties. Nevertheless, through force of circumstances they sometimes have to undertake diplomatic work; and there are many occasions in which, when such work has been unavoidable, they have performed it with eminent success. They are still soldiers, engaged in military operations, but the exigencies of the service make it incumbent on them to act, in virtue of their executive authority, as for the moment diplomatists. These are quite different circumstances from those of a military man who, because he is found to have the requisite qualities, passes over for longer or shorter periods from the military to the diplomatic profession; for instance, General Sebastiani, the distinguished French ambassador in London from 1835 to 1840, had been a hard-fighting and successful Napoleonic soldier until 1815. After the fall of the Emperor and a period of exile, he engaged in politics under Louis XVIII and Charles IX. He was a splendid social figure and a not unskilful diplomatist, though he was

<sup>1</sup> Lady G. Cecil, *Life of Robert, Marquis of Salisbury* (1931), III, p. 218.

<sup>2</sup> Callwell, *Sir Henry Wilson*, II, p. 193.

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unable to solve the “Eastern” crisis of 1840; but his successor at the London Embassy, Guizot, did no better.

Of military (including in this category, naval) men acting on occasion, and in the course of their military undertakings, as diplomatists, there are many instances, although they are mostly “exceptional.” The celebrated *démarche* of Commodore Martin of the British Navy in 1742 is such an instance. The incident occurred during the War of the Austrian Succession.

A squadron of the British fleet, entrusted to Commodore Martin, suddenly appeared in the Bay of Naples, and threatened an immediate bombardment unless the King would engage in writing to withdraw his troops (there were 20,000 men) from the Spanish army, and to observe in future a strict neutrality. The Neapolitan court, wholly unprepared for the defence of the city, endeavoured to elude the demand by prolonging the negotiation. But the gallant Englishman, with a spirit not unworthy the Roman who drew a circle around the Asiatic despot, and bade him not step from it until he had made his decision,<sup>1</sup> laid his watch upon the table in his cabin, and told the negotiators that their answer must be given within the space of an hour, or that the bombardment should begin. This proceeding, however railed at by the diplomatists as contrary to all form and etiquette, produced a result such as they had seldom attained by protocols. Within the hour Don Carlos acquiesced in the required terms. Thus was the neutrality of a considerable kingdom in this contest secured by the sight of five British ships of the line during four-and-twenty hours; for their number was but such, and no longer time elapsed between their first appearance and their final departure from the bay.<sup>2</sup>

A few years later, in 1747, in the confused efforts that were being made to bring the War of the Austrian Succession

<sup>1</sup> Livy, *History*, lib. xiv, c. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Lord Mahon, *History of England*, III, p. 137 (Chapter XXIV).

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to an end, the military acted as extemporized diplomatists with some success. The Austro-Prussian War which had started in 1740 with the invasion of Frederick II of Prussia into Silesia, spread out into a general European War. This, like all general wars, dragged along its course of suffering and carnage year after year, long after the original causes about which it began had ceased to operate. A general war arouses so many conflicting and irreconcilable interests, that the belligerents cannot bring themselves to break it off before the stage of sheer exhaustion and ruin is reached. Moreover, war cuts diplomatic contact; and the wider the war spreads the more difficult is it to find any neutral Government with sufficient prestige and means to re-establish the contact. In the War of the Austrian Succession Europe had involved itself in such an *impasse* that the only genuine neutral left was the Grand Turk, Mohammed V, who offered his good offices in order to try to reconcile the Christian states with each other. The offer was not accepted, but the lesson was not wholly lost on the Governments engaged in the suicidal struggle.

An English soldier, General Ligonier, had been captured at the Battle of Lawfeldt in July 1747. He was an influential, well-connected man, as well as a fine soldier. Marshal Saxe, the French commander-in-chief on the Low Countries "Front," had some conversations with Ligonier, who was then allowed to send proposals to the British Government for a negotiation. The affair was managed unobtrusively, for (as in all general wars) the allied and associated states were on the watch and were quick to take alarm or offence; and it was well done, for the French and British Government, having begun with the Ligonier-Saxe "irregular" negotiation, established regular contact through professional diplomats, the Earl of Sand-

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wich and the Marquis de Puiseux, who, meeting at Liège (in the theatre of war!) on September 11, 1747, arranged for the summoning of a General Peace Conference at Aix-la-Chapelle.

During the French Revolution, though it was politically an abnormal period, the men of the pen retained control of diplomatic action until the arrival of Bonaparte. This successful and autocratic general, while still only twenty-seven years old, insisted upon himself conducting the negotiations which naturally followed upon his victories. Thus in 1797, at the end of his first great Italian campaign, he engaged with the Austrian diplomatist, Louis Cobenzl, in the series of negotiations which led to the Peace Treaties of Leoben and Campo Formio. In this, as in subsequent negotiations, the defects of his character and training became apparent.<sup>1</sup> Such successes as he was able to register in treaties were not due to skilful diplomacy, but to the fact that he was negotiating with a defeated foe, and practically on the very field where his victorious army was bivouacked. After he became First Consul in 1799, he usually (though not invariably) entrusted the actual task of negotiation to civilians—to Talleyrand, or to his brother Joseph. Naturally, after he became Emperor in 1804, he largely withdrew from direct participation in negotiation; and when he began to lose battles he gave over the responsibility almost wholly to Caulaincourt, Duc de Vicence, who, indeed, on several occasions would have gained for his master a fairly favourable peace had the Emperor only allowed him a free hand. In truth, Napoleon's career, though it shows that soldiers can be excellent administrators, is no argument for the combination of soldiering and diplomacy.

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 54.

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The nineteenth and twentieth centuries furnish many instances of military (and naval) men acting as diplomatists in the performance of their military duties, either because career-diplomatists were not available in the circumstances or because the negotiation involved technical military questions.

In 1839 an old dispute between British and American settlers in the Aroostook valley, on the border of New Brunswick and Maine, flared up into actual hostilities. The United States Government sent General Winfield Scott with troops to deal with the situation. Colonel Harvey, Lieutenant-Governor of New Brunswick, also went with such British troops as were available to the scene of hostilities. There was no fighting, however, between the regular British and American troops, for Scott and Harvey entered into negotiations and arrived at a provisional agreement without further bloodshed. A war postponed may be a war averted. The Harvey–Scott provisional settlement was followed by regular negotiations between the British Foreign Office and the United States Department of State, ending with the mission of Lord Ashburton and the Treaty of Washington in 1842.

The negotiation of an armistice or a surrender is almost of necessity undertaken by soldiers, and, when it comes their way, is as much their duty as it is to undertake legal work when they act as military judges. Terms of surrender are a treaty, but unless the signing parties have explicit instructions or permission from their Governments, the terms may be set aside or varied by the competent authority. The Capitulation of Limerick, made by General Ginkel, the commander of the English army, and General Sarsfield, commander of the Irish, in 1691, consisted of two treaties, military and civil. The military treaty permitted such officers and men of Sarsfield's army as chose to go to France to be conveyed there.

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This stipulation was forthwith carried into effect. The civil treaty contained certain matters for which parliamentary ratification was reserved. Macaulay held that the English Act of Parliament passed subsequently in the same year strictly conformed to the terms of the civil treaty, that is, it recognized that Roman Catholicism in Ireland should be tolerated in so far as it had been tolerated in the reign of Charles II.<sup>1</sup>

In the early part of the Seven Years War, in 1757, the Duke of Cumberland, commanding an army of Hanoverians and subsidized German troops, was defeated by the Duc de Richelieu at Hastenbeck. Through the mediation of the Danish Governor of Oldenburg, Cumberland saved his army from destruction or capture by the Convention of Closter-seven, signed by himself and the Duc de Richelieu. The convention (although concluded through the mediation of an experienced Danish minister, the Comte de Lyncar) was drafted in terms so lacking in precision that both French and British Governments accused each other of failing to carry out the terms. George II, on the advice of Pitt, gladly seized the opportunity provided by this vagueness and by the alleged violations on the part of the French to repudiate the Convention altogether.

In the age of telegraphs and other means of rapid consultation, no commander in the field need ever be without authority for any convention which he may have to make. Nevertheless, the terms of surrender accorded by General Grant to General Lee in McLean's house at Oppomattox Court House, near Richmond, on April 9, 1865, had not been considered and authorized in detail by Abraham Lincoln. There are numerous precedents establishing a routine and form of courtesy for conferences concerning surrenders; but there was very little routine and no formalism at the Appo-

<sup>1</sup> Macaulay, *History of England* (ed. 1873), II, pp. 291, 300-1.

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mattox Conference. Lee, it is true, took quite naturally the historic rôle. He was tall, handsome, wearing a new full-dress uniform, and a jewelled sword. Grant, who was a thick-set, ungraceful man, had no tunic, and wore an ordinary army shirt, open at the neck, and no sword. There was no intention, however, and no suggestion, of humiliating the conquered foe. On the contrary, Grant was friendly, sympathetic, and depressed because of Lee's misfortune. The two generals, both West Point men, who had served together in the Mexican War of 1846, talked of old times in the army. Then Grant called for pen and ink and sat down at the table. In his *Memoirs* he declares: "When I put my pen to paper I did not know the first word that I should make use of in writing the terms." These were:

Gen. R. E. Lee.

Gen. In accordance with the substance of my letter to you of the 8th inst., I propose to receive the surrender of the army of N. Va. on the following terms, to wit: Rolls of all the officers and men to be made in duplicate. One copy to be given to an officer designated by me, the other to be retained by such officer or officers as you designate. The officers to give their individual paroles not to take up arms against the Government of the United States until properly exchanged, and each company or regimental commander sign a like parole for the men of their commands. The arms, artillery and public property to be parked and stacked, and turned over to the officer appointed by me to receive them. This will not embrace the side-arms of the officers, nor their private horses or baggage. This done, each officer and man will be allowed to return to their homes, not to be disturbed by United States authority so long as they observe their paroles and the laws in force where they may reside.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant*, II, pp. 491-2.

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After further conversation with Lee, Grant promised verbally that any men (not only officers, as in the written terms) who owned their own horse could take it back with them to their farms.

Lee agreed to the terms, writing a brief note of five lines. Then he rose to leave the room. On the threshold he paused, looking outwards, struck his right fist thrice slowly into the palm of his gauntleted hand. Then, taking the reins of "Traveller" from his orderly, he mounted and rode off.<sup>1</sup>

A curious system of military diplomacy functioned between the Prussian and Russian courts in the time of the King-Emperor William I and Tsar Alexander II. Each monarch, in addition to his regular ambassador and the Embassy attachés, maintained at the court of the other a military representative through whom he could directly communicate. The system might have led to abuses or to confusion with the regular diplomacy, although in practice no trouble was made; it was suppressed by the Tsar Alexander III (1881–94), but renewed again between Nicholas II and William II on the suggestion of the latter. A more dangerous system, perhaps, was that adopted by the French and Russian Governments for the negotiation of the binding convention which constituted the Franco-Russian alliance of 1894. It was negotiated by the General Staffs of the two Governments, and was consequently not made public to the French Chamber.<sup>2</sup>

The Fashoda incident of 1898 appears a slight thing in retrospect, but it nearly made a war between France and Great Britain. While an Anglo-Egyptian army under General Kitchener was reconquering the abandoned Egyptian Sudan, a small French force, coming from West Africa, occupied

<sup>1</sup> S. E. Morison, *The Oxford History of the United States* (1927), II, p. 320.

<sup>2</sup> *Livre Jaune: L'Alliance Franco-Russe*, pp. 144–51.

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Fashoda, which the Anglo-Egyptian authorities claimed as part of the Sudan. Kitchener reported the incident, through the British Acting Agent at Cairo, to Lord Salisbury, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (September 25, 1898).

I have just returned here from Fashoda where I found Captain Marchand accompanied by eight officers and 120 men located in the old Government buildings, over which they had hoisted the French flag; I sent a letter announcing my approach the day before my arrival at Fashoda. . . .

When we arrived at Fashoda, Captain Marchand and M. Germain came on board, and I at once stated that the presence of a French force at Fashoda and in the valley of the Nile was regarded as a direct infringement of the rights of the Egyptian Government and of that of Great Britain, and I protested in the strongest terms against their occupation of Fashoda and their hoisting the French flag in the dominions of His Highness the Khedive. In reply Captain Marchand stated that he had precise orders to occupy the country and to hoist the French flag over the Government buildings at Fashoda, and that it was impossible for him to retire without receiving orders from his Government to that effect, but he did not expect that those orders would be delayed. On my pressing him to say whether, seeing that I had a preponderating force, he was prepared to resist the hoisting of the Egyptian flag at Fashoda, he hesitated and replied that resistance was impossible. I then caused the flag to be hoisted on a ruined bastion of the old Egyptian fortifications about 500 yards south of the French flag, and on the only road which leads to the interior from the French position which is surrounded by impassable marshes on all sides. Before leaving for the south, I handed to Captain Marchand a formal protest in writing, on behalf of the British and Egyptian Governments, against any occupation by France of any part of the Nile Valley, such occupation being an infringement of the rights of these Governments which I could not recognize. . . . The position in which Captain Marchand finds

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himself at Fashoda is as impossible as it is absurd. He is cut off from the interior, and his water transport is quite inadequate; he is, moreover, short of ammunition and supplies, which must take months to reach him; he has no following in the country and nothing could have saved him and his expedition from being annihilated by the Dervishes had we been a fortnight later in crushing the Khalifa.<sup>1</sup>

Finding his position as assertor of French sovereignty over Fashoda impossible in fact to sustain in face of Kitchener's forces, Marchand submitted with good grace and dignity. This official and distinctly troublesome matter having been arranged, Marchand returned Kitchener's visit. Glasses were brought forth and the French commander and English commander conversed agreeably as they refreshed themselves with a whisky and soda.<sup>2</sup> A month afterwards the French Minister of Foreign Affairs was saying to one of his assistants in great good humour: "The evacuation of Fashoda will soon be only an unpleasant memory."<sup>3</sup> Indeed, it was soon scarcely even that. The map no longer bears its name, which was changed in 1904 to Kodok.

In the South African War of 1899–1902 soldiers had a conspicuous share in such diplomatic business as the war itself permitted or required. This was probably due to the fact that on the side of the South African Republic and the Orange Free State, owing to the small number of available *personnel*, the same men had to do the fighting and the negotiating. A capitulation in the field naturally fell to be concluded by the commanders. The surrender of General Cronje to Field-

<sup>1</sup> *British Documents on the Origins of the War*, I, pp. 167–8.

<sup>2</sup> The French Government did not decide to evacuate Fashoda until November 3, 1898. *British Documents on the Origins of the War*, I, p. 188 (No. 226).

<sup>3</sup> Paléologue, *Un Grand Tournant de la Politique Mondiale* (1934), p. 13.

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Marshal Lord Roberts at Paardeberg on February 27, 1900 had somewhat unusual preliminaries. For over a week the Boer forces had been strictly beleaguered in a mainly dry river-bed. Cronje, on February 19, 1900, asked for a twenty-four hours' armistice in order to bury his dead. French, to whom the message was first sent, replied that he would consult the commander-in-chief. "Meanwhile, I will not attack your laager. As you are already completely surrounded, I would advise you to surrender with your troops, when peace will again reign in the land." Lord Roberts refused Cronje's request, broke off the Armistice, and demanded unconditional surrender.

Cronje replied (1 p.m.):

"Since you are so unmerciful as not to accord me the time asked for, nothing remains for me to do but as you wish."

Lord Roberts replied (2 p.m.):

"Accept surrender, please return with Captain Liebmann." But when Captain Liebmann went to Cronje with the note and flag of truce, Cronje sent back a reply:

"Since you are so unmerciful as not to accord me the time asked for, nothing remains for me to do. You do as you wish. During my life-time I shall never surrender. If you wish to bombard, fire away.—Dixi."

On February 21st, Lord Roberts wrote to Cronje:

"I have only heard to-day that there are women and children in your laager. If this is the case, I will be happy to accord them a safe-conduct through my lines to any place they may select. I must express my regret to you that these women and children were exposed to our fire during the late attacks. . . . I have also heard that you are in want of surgeons and medicine. If you require them it will afford me great pleasure to send you either the one or the other."

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Cronje answered:

"Safe-conduct declined. I accept the offer of surgeons and medicines, on the condition that when the surgeons have once entered this laager, they must not leave it until I have removed to another place."

To this, Lord Roberts replied:

"... In view of the conditions which you impose, and of the circumstance that I cannot dispense with my surgeons for so indefinite a period, I am compelled reluctantly to withdraw my offer."

On February 27th, Cronje wrote to Lord Roberts:

"I have the honour to inform you herewith that the Council of War which was held yesterday decided on the unconditional surrender of all the invested forces. Under the circumstances we are forced to this. We throw ourselves, therefore, upon the mercy of Her Majesty the Queen. As a token of surrender, a white flag will be hoisted this morning at six o'clock." The German Staff Officer who witnessed the proceedings writes: "The surrender of the Boers was carried out without incident in a very dignified manner, Lord Roberts greeting brave General Cronje with the words: "You have made a very gallant defence, Sir." He then entertained him in his own tent."<sup>1</sup>

The treaty which concluded the South African War was negotiated by a conference at Vereeniging consisting of sixty-four delegates of the burghers of the Transvaal and Orange Free State and British delegates, among them Lord Milner and General Kitchener. "The negotiations proceeded slowly, for the Boers, however desperate their plight, were loath to recognize the annexation of their country without some

<sup>1</sup> See *The German Official Account of the War in South Africa*, trans. Waters (1905), pp. 205-10, and Appendix VII.

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guarantee of national freedom or self-government. This the British representatives had no authority to offer, nor was their Government likely to give them such authority. Kitchener, however, on his own initiative, told Smuts that in his opinion there would at any rate within a few years be a change in the party in power in England, and that a new Cabinet and Parliament would probably give the Boers self-government. The Boer plenipotentiaries then proceeded to sign the peace articles.<sup>1</sup>

Kitchener's intervention is a rare instance of purely diplomatic initiative undertaken by a soldier outside his professional duties; for the Vereeniging Conference was charged with negotiating a permanent political peace, not an armistice. During the World War, at the peace conference of Brest-Litovsk (December 1917–January 1918), the military element had also an unusually prominent part. The Russian delegates were Yoffe, Kameneff, and Madame Bizenko, and later, Trotsky; the German delegates were Prince Leopold of Bavaria, Herr von Kühlmann (Secretary of State), and General von Hoffmann; the chief delegate of Austria was Count Czernin. The delegates of the Central Powers found the Russians difficult to deal with. Yoffe was continually bringing the world revolution into the discussions. Kühlmann and Czernin, experienced career-diplomatists, showed admirable patience and self-control. They argued every point with good temper and skill. General Hoffmann thought that this method would produce no results with the Bolsheviks. He told Czernin that "a touch of the whip" was necessary. After this, he seized the occasion of an unusually rambling dis-

<sup>1</sup> Mowat, *International Relations* (1931), pp. 60–1. This account of the Vereeniging negotiations has been confirmed by an eye-witness and participant.

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cussion of the Bolsheviks, to make a short, sharp speech (January 12th), in which he reminded the Russians that "the German armies were far within the Russian borders." Czernin was shocked, and described Hoffmann's effort as an "unfortunate speech." The General, however, was thoroughly pleased with his intervention, which he had carefully prepared.<sup>1</sup> As a matter of fact, it had no effect on the Bolsheviks. The negotiations were spun out for another six weeks, until on February 18th the German authorities declared the armistice at an end and reopened hostilities. The rapid, unopposed advance of the German troops to within striking distance of Petrograd brought the Bolshevik Government to a sense of realities, and they assented to the German terms, called the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, on March 3rd (1918).

The *Generalissimo* of the Entente Powers, Marshal Foch, kept strictly, in diplomatic affairs, to his position as a technical adviser. The task of negotiation of the Armistice of November 11, 1918, naturally fell to him and to his military and naval colleagues. As the War had completely broken off all relations between the belligerents, except relations carried on by shell and poison gas, it was only with great difficulty that diplomatic touch was re-established, even when both sides were willing. The warring Governments could communicate by radio, but to arrange for a clear, recognizable road, safe from shot, between the hostile fronts was a complicated technical problem. The German armistice delegation, consisting of Secretary of State Erzberger, Count Oberndorff (a Foreign Office official), Major-General von Winterfeld, and Naval Captain Vanselow, left Spa in automobiles on November 7th. They had been directed, by wireless, to

<sup>1</sup> Czernin, *In the World War* (1919), p. 237; Hoffmann, *The War of Lost Opportunities* (1924), pp. 218-19.

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present themselves at the Chimay-Fourmies crossing on the La Capelle road. Firing was stopped on either side, and the crossing was marked by beams from searchlights. Arriving at the crossing at 9.15 p.m., the German delegation was met by Allied officers and was taken in automobiles, with drawn curtains, to a château for the night. Next morning they proceeded to Rethondes. The railway train in which Foch travelled and worked was drawn up, waiting. Foch, Admiral Wemyss, British First Sea Lord, and Admiral Sims of the United States Navy were in the saloon. The Germans entered. The German delegates were introduced at 9 a.m. Their credentials were examined.

Places were now taken at the conference table. Marshal Foch asked the German delegates the purpose of their visit. Herr Erzberger replied that the German delegation had come to receive the proposals of the Allied Powers looking to an armistice on land, on sea, and in the air, on all fronts, and in the colonies.

Marshal Foch replied that he had no proposals to make.

Count Oberndorff asked the Marshal in what form he desired that they should express themselves. He did not stand on form; he was ready to say that the German delegation asked the conditions of the armistice.

Marshal Foch replied that he had no conditions to offer.

Herr Erzberger read the text of President Wilson's last note, stating that Marshal Foch is authorized to make known the armistice conditions.

Marshal Foch replied that he was authorized to make these known if the German delegates asked for an armistice.

"Do you ask for an armistice? If you do, I can inform you of the conditions subject to which it can be obtained."

Herr Erzberger and Count Oberndorff declared that they asked for an armistice.

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Marshal Foch then answered that the armistice conditions would be read.<sup>1</sup>

The Armistice of Rethondes, and the armistice terms concluded on the other "Fronts" in 1918, did not require much negotiation, as they were, in effect, simply the surrenders of lost causes. In the "Near Eastern" theatre of war, high officers sometimes had important business to do of a diplomatic nature. Of General Sarrail, French commander-in-chief of the Salonica Army, it has been said: "Nobody showed himself to be more haughty, more maladroit."<sup>2</sup> King Constantine of Greece, who was in a very difficult position between his Imperial German brother-in-law and the Protecting Powers (France, Great Britain, Russia), was not treated very tactfully. A difficult task fell to General Harington in the affair of Chanak, 1922. The Treaty of Sèvres between the Powers and Turkey at the end of the World War had established neutral zones on the southern shore of the Sea of Marmara, at Chanak and Ismid. On August 26, 1922, the Greek army, which was endeavouring to enforce the terms of the Treaty of Sèvres, was put to rout by the Turkish armies of Mustafa Kemal at Afium Karahissar in Asia Minor. The victorious Turkish troops came on rapidly towards the coast, and the intention was officially proclaimed of crossing over to Thrace and of pursuing the career of conquest there. The consequences of a Turkish advance into Thrace or Macedonia would be terrible; but before them lay the Neutral Zones of Ismid (opposite Constantinople) and Chanak (opposite Gallipoli) which were held by Allied troops. The French and Italian Governments saw fit to withdraw their

<sup>1</sup> Foch, *Memoirs* (trans., 1931), p. 548.

<sup>2</sup> W. D'Ormesson, *Enfances diplomatiques* (1932), p. 74.

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troops from the Zones by September 21st; the British troops were left alone.

The British Government had declared that it would maintain the neutrality of the Zones. The Chanak Zone was held only by one British battalion. On September 23rd, Turkish cavalry entered into the Zone.

The maintenance of peace, not merely in Chanak but in Europe, depended now upon two soldiers, General Harington, commander of the British troops in the Near East (his headquarters were Constantinople), and Mustafa Kemal, the victorious leader of the "Angora" armies. General Harington had the task of being firm, showing clearly that he would defend all access to the two Zones; and yet, if he were to achieve the greatest good, he must somehow, if possible, avoid war. Obviously, nothing but the highest diplomatic (as well as military) talents could deal with such a situation. General Mustafa Kemal, on his side (like Bismarck in 1866 with victorious generals ready to advance on Vienna), had to weigh political against military gains. Both soldiers—Harington and Kemal—displayed the highest qualities of statesmanship. Harington spoke quite clearly, and was busily reinforcing the Zones and heaping up entrenchments. The Turkish patrols were met by British cavalry, and were turned back, without fighting. Mustafa Kemal stopped his troops and generals and so won his greatest victory. A conference was held in the little port of Mudania, where an armistice was signed on October 11th.

Naval officers have frequently undertaken work of a diplomatic nature. Wherever trouble is "brewing," and if water transport is possible, warships are sent, but with the purpose of avoiding, not provoking, hostilities. The method of Commodore Martin at Naples in 1742 has not been

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commonly employed, and can scarcely be described as diplomatic. British naval officers, however, owing to the power of the Navy and Government which they represent, have sometimes been able to perform important mediatorial or conciliatory functions. In May 1860 Garibaldi with his thousand redshirts, having descended upon Sicily in time of peace, attacked Palermo. A British squadron was in the port, under command of Admiral Mundy. The Neapolitan army and populace were disaffected; the general, Lanza, though he had a garrison of twenty thousand, was in a difficult situation. The British admiral tendered his good offices, which were accepted by both parties to the struggle. Negotiations were conducted in the admiral's cabin in H.M.S. *Hannibal*, and on May 30th General Lanza surrendered on terms.

The work of Admiral Howard Kelly at Shanghai in 1932 was diplomatic and conciliatory in the best sense of the words, and resulted in a notable peaceful achievement. The Japanese Government, provoked by Chinese commercial boycott and by outrages on certain Japanese subjects, ordered its troops into action at Shanghai in January 1932, and engaged in hostilities with a Chinese army. Military operations on a large scale were soon in progress, with consequent danger to peace, not merely in the Far East, but even elsewhere. The efforts of the League of Nations and of the United States maintained diplomatic contact between the Japanese and Chinese Governments. The diplomatic and consular agents of the Powers at Shanghai were active in offering and employing good offices. No real progress, however, was made towards a cessation of hostilities, until Admiral Howard Kelly managed to arrange for a meeting of Japanese and Chinese authorities (civil as well as military) on February 28, 1932, in his cabin in his

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flagship, H.M.S. *Kent*.<sup>1</sup> This incident created a profound impression all over the world, so that its ultimate result did not fall below the immediate effect; the whole world felt that a real peace-directive had come into operation. This feeling acted upon the other peace agencies—the Council of the League of Nations, the diplomatic corps at Shanghai—and contributed to their effectiveness. The result was the armistice signed on May 5, 1932, by the Chinese and Japanese representatives, and also by the British, French, Italian, and United States ministers, a remarkable instance of international solidarity, and of the international status of the diplomatic corps. There is no doubt that the naval negotiator was acting in concert with the regular diplomatists and under authority of the Home Government. It is not so clear, in regard to some of the interventions of Japanese high military officers with the Nanking Government in summer 1935, that the Tokio Foreign Office retained complete power of guidance and control.

All these instances concern soldiers who take up diplomacy only incidentally, on special occasions, and in the course of following their military profession. It is quite a different state of affairs when certain soldiers, who are found to be by nature particularly qualified for diplomacy, are taken out of their profession, for shorter or longer periods, and are given diplomatic work. These men, for the time being, cease to be soldiers, and enter the career of professional diplomatists. An example is Marlborough, perhaps England's greatest commander, whose sweet temper, firmness of purpose, and knowledge of men and affairs made him one of the most successful diplomatists of his age. He was the English plenipotentiary in the successful negotiations for a "Grand

<sup>1</sup> *The Times*, March 1, 1932.

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Alliance" in 1701, the alliance under which England entered into the War of the Spanish Succession against Louis XIV. Marlborough also undertook, with great success, a very important diplomatic mission to the Swedish king, Charles XII, at Altranstadt in Saxony in 1706. The Duke of Wellington, not so well suited as Marlborough to diplomatic work, was one of the British delegates at the Congress of Vienna in 1815, and at the Congress of Verona in 1822. In 1826 he went on a diplomatic mission to the court of Russia, in order, if possible, to bring Russian and British policy into line on the question of Greece's struggle against Turkey. The Duke's character, career, and bearing were naturally sympathetic to the Tsar Nicholas I, so the mission had a good chance of success and ended favourably. One of the distinguished officers that came out of the Duke's Peninsular campaigns, Lord William Russell, left the army and went into diplomacy. He was British minister to the court of Prussia in 1837; and though, it is said, he preferred the sword to the pen, he was "a keen and able diplomatist."<sup>1</sup> Lord Lyons, the famous British minister at Washington during the American Civil War, and later at Paris, had begun active life in the Royal Navy (his father, Admiral Lyons, was also a distinguished diplomatist). Lord D'Abernon, who carried out with great distinction the difficult task of representing Great Britain at Berlin after the World War, began his active career as an officer in the Guards. He was at the Embassy in Berlin from October 1920 to October 1926, and served through the period of the invasion of the Ruhr, the Great Inflation, and the making of the Locarno Pacts. He found the Germans likeable and trustworthy. He became an admirer and friend of the statesman Gustav Stresemann, a very vigorous per-

<sup>1</sup> *The Diplomatic Reminiscences of Lord Augustus Loftus* (1892), I, p. 28.

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sonality, with such a lively intelligence and such power of speech that it was difficult to converse with him: a conversation with him was apt to become a Stresemann monologue. Lord D'Abernon at one period met this difficulty by inducing Stresemann to sit for his portrait to Augustus John at the Embassy. While the German statesman was immobile before the painter, and comparatively silent, the English diplomatist entered upon important business. The artist knew no German, so everything was favourable. When he finally left Berlin, Lord D'Abernon wrote in his diary: "I have found German statesmen reliable and strong."<sup>1</sup> What higher praise is there?

<sup>1</sup> *An Ambassador of Peace, Lord D'Abernon's Diary* (1930), II, p. 268.

## CHAPTER VIII

### GENERAL STAFFS AND DIPLOMACY

So long as states have to defend themselves or to engage in war, it is natural that Governments should desire their military forces to be as "keen" as possible, that is, ready and even eager to go to war whenever the Government deems it necessary to do so. There is a remarkable passage in Bismarck's *Reflections* bearing on this subject. The great Chancellor (a politician throughout, and not, in spite of his incessant wearing of uniform, a soldier) found the "offensive spirit" of the General Staff and of the whole army of the greatest use when he was making his complicated and risky calculations for future policy. Referring to Field-Marshal von Moltke, his "military colleague in the King's service," Bismarck writes:

His love of combat and delight in battles were a great support to me in carrying out the policy I regarded as necessary, in opposition to the intelligible and justifiable aversion in a most influential quarter. It proved inconvenient to me in 1867, in the Luxemburg question, and in 1875, and afterwards, on the question whether it was desirable, as regards a war which we should probably have to face sooner or later, to bring it on, *anticipando*, before the adversary could improve his preparations. I have always opposed the theory which says "yes"; not only at the Luxemburg period, but likewise subsequently for twenty years in the conviction that even 'victorious wars cannot be justified unless they are forced upon one, and that one cannot see the cards of Providence far enough ahead to anticipate historical development according to one's own calculation. It is natural that in the staff of the army not only

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younger active officers, but likewise experienced strategists, should feel the need of turning to account the efficiency of the troops led by them and their own capacity to lead, and of making them prominent in history. It would be a matter of regret if this effect of the military spirit did not exist in the army; the task of keeping its results within such limits as the nation's needs of peace can justly claim is the duty of the political, not the military heads of the State. That at the time of the Luxemburg question, during the crisis of 1875, invented by Gortchakoff and France, and even down to the most recent times, the staff and its leaders have allowed themselves to be led astray and to endanger peace lies in the very spirit of the institution, which I would not forgo. It only becomes dangerous under a monarch whose policy lacks sense of proportion and power to resist one-sided and constitutionally unjustifiable influences.

A strong statesman, like Bismarck, can probably control a General Staff and keep its offensive spirit within what he decides to be its due bounds. Even the strongest statesman, however, may be overborne by the arguments of the military "experts," which naturally he cannot refute on technical grounds. Less strong-willed and less assured statesmen than Bismarck are always liable, in times of crisis, to yield, against their better judgment, before the arguments of the General Staff, and to subordinate political to military aims. Count Bernstorff, the able German ambassador at Washington in the World War, inclined to the opinion, as the result of his observations and experiences, that the German Government lost the War through subordinating political to military "necessity," and that the Entente won the War because they refused to give way to the demands of their military advisers, when, through disregarding this, a political advantage could be obtained. The outstanding instance of the German Civil

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Government, obviously against its political judgment, submitting to the demand of the General Staff, was when they consented to the invasion of Belgium in 1914. An immense military advantage was gained, but politically the German cause was ruined. No German historian has ever argued that the military gain outbalanced the political loss. The decision (which will be dealt with later) to declare unrestricted submarine warfare is another instance of the subordination of a political to military "necessity."

The classic instance of the statesmanlike refusal to forgo a political aim in face of the reasonable and almost unanswerable demands of the generals is Bismarck's in July 1866, after the great Prussian victory at Sadowa. Since the beginning of the campaign, and in the preliminary period of political and military preparation, Moltke had worked in complete agreement with Bismarck, not endeavouring to influence or alter the Minister-President's political dispositions by military considerations. Such loyal and forbearing behaviour gave Moltke and the other generals all the greater claim to be heard and to have their own way when a military question of fundamental importance had to be decided. A question certainly of this kind arose immediately after the victory of Sadowa. The Austrian army in Moravia had been defeated and driven off the field; but the military strength of Austria, though it had sustained a tremendous blow, was not broken. Complete military success, which is the immediate object of war, could be ensured only by an advance of the Prussian army upon Vienna. For this, in the circumstances, the victorious soldiers were not merely ready, but eager, expectant, insistent. Vienna is some hundred and sixty miles distant; the roads were good, weather favourable; only the Florisdorff fortified lines outside Vienna were in the way, and Moltke

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calculated that these could be stormed with a loss of about 2,000 men; or Florisdorff could be masked, and the war prosecuted from Hungarian *terrain*. Bismarck said no. His whole political system, his deep-laid, delicately adjusted, complicated plans for the solution of the "German Question," for the union of Germany under Prussian hegemony, and for the maintenance of a particular kind of balance of power in Europe, depended upon a halt after Sadowa. The Austro-Prussian War must go on no further; Austria must not be humiliated; Vienna must not even be approached. The generals were amazed, indignant, insistent; the old King, a soldier, whose appetite for victories and annexations increased, as Bismarck writes, with every success, naturally sympathized with them; besides, reason was surely altogether on their side. What was the war for if not to win every possible victory and to destroy the enemy's military power?

A council of war held under the presidency of the King, at army headquarters on July 23, 1866, with Bismarck present, maintained the decision to continue the advance. Bismarck was in despair, and as usual in all times of strain became a bundle of nerves, verging upon complete breakdown. Nevertheless, not pain, nor weariness, nor despair deflected him in the least from the decision which he believed to be correct. On June 24th he went to the King with a memorandum of the argument in favour of an immediate end of the war. The King was immovable. "What seemed to me to be paramount with His Majesty was the aversion of the military party to interrupt the victorious course of the army." Bismarck went back, completely dejected, to his quarters, and went up to his room, four storeys above the plain.

On returning to my room I was in the mood that the thought occurred to me whether it would not be better to fall out of the

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open window, which was four storeys high; and I did not look round when I heard the door open, although I suspected that the person entering was the Crown Prince, whose room in the same corridor I had just passed. I felt his hand on my shoulder, while he said: "You know that I was against this War. You considered it necessary, and the responsibility for it lies on you. If you are now persuaded that our end is attained, and peace must now be concluded, I am ready to support you and defend your opinion with my father." He then repaired to the King, and came back after a short half-hour, in the same calm, friendly mood, but with the words: "It has been a very difficult business, but my father has consented." This consent found expression in a note written with lead pencil on the margin of one of my last memoranda, something to this effect: "Inasmuch as my Minister-President has left me in the lurch in the face of the enemy, and here I am not in a position to supply his place, I have discussed the question with my son; and as he has associated himself with the Minister-President's opinion, I find myself reluctantly compelled, after such brilliant victories on the part of the army, to bite this sour apple and accept so disgraceful a peace." I do not think I am mistaken as to the exact words, although the document is not accessible to me at present. In any case I have given the sense of it; and, despite its bitterness of expression, it was to me a joyful release from a tension that was becoming unbearable. I gladly accepted the royal assent to what I regarded as politically necessary without taking offence at its ungracious form.

The Preliminary Peace of Nikolsburg with Austria was signed four days later, July 28, 1866. Within a year Prussia was head of the North German Confederation; within four years, of the German Empire; and all with the acquiescence, if not exactly the goodwill, of Austria, which in 1879 became Germany's firm ally.

It is very difficult for General Staffs not to become agencies

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dangerous to peace. Their business is to prepare mobilization programmes and plans of campaign for every contingency that may conceivably occur. All their arrangements depend upon accurate timing; the loss or gain of a day may have incalculably important consequences. The most important consideration for them, when an international crisis occurs, is to know the last moment at which it is, from a military point of view, safe to remain at peace, or the most favourable moment for engaging in war. The advice which the military experts give to their civilian chief, the minister or cabinet of ministers, during a crisis, is bound to have tremendous weight. With a weak ministry, it may have far more weight than it ought to have; because, naturally, the General Staff tender their advice, looking only to the military aspects of the question, on the assumption that the civilian ministers are fully conversant with all the political considerations, and will resolutely give to these considerations the weight which they deserve. Unfortunately, the civilians, with the timidity of amateurs when confronted by experts, often give way before the plain-spoken military men with their crisp language and resolute countenances. They do not realize that the military men (if minds could only be read) are equally timid when confronted by resolute civilians with political arguments. The great Bismarck himself seems to have forgotten this in 1871 when he allowed himself to be persuaded against his better judgment by the generals into annexing Metz. On August 14, 1871, according to the report of M. de Gabriac, the French *chargé d'affaires* at Berlin, Bismarck said:<sup>1</sup>

I am under no illusions. It is absurd for us to have taken from you Metz which is French. I did not wish to keep it for Germany.

<sup>1</sup> *Documents diplomatiques français (1871-1914)*, 1<sup>er</sup> série, tome 1, p. 62.

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The General Staff asked me if I could guarantee that France would not take revenge. I replied that on the contrary I was quite convinced that she would do so, and that this war would be the first which would break out between Germany and France, but that it would be followed by many wars. "If that is so," they said to me, "Metz is a *glacis* behind which France can place a hundred thousand men. We must keep it." I could say the same about Alsace and Lorraine. If peace is to be durable, it is a fault on our part to have taken it [*sic*] from you, because for us these provinces are an embarrassment.

Such lapses, however, were not common. In general, the Iron Chancellor seems to have kept the General Staff in control. His immediate successors did so too—Caprivi, Hohenlohe, Bülow. The successor of Moltke as Chief of the General Staff, Count Schlieffen, was careful to recognize the limit between his responsibility and that of the Government. In 1905, when Russia was involved in war with Japan, Schlieffen placed a General Staff memorandum before Bülow, explaining the situation of Germany from a military point of view in the light of the international political circumstances. The conclusion of the memorandum was that this was the favourable moment for Germany to make war on the Dual Alliance. Schlieffen felt it to be his duty to point this out; Bülow took no action on the memorandum. Schlieffen took no further step.<sup>1</sup>

Far different was the attitude of Field-Marshal Conrad, Chief of the Austro-Hungarian General Staff, 1906–11 and 1912–17. Although (or perhaps because) he had never seen any fighting, he regarded war as a normal incident in public affairs, a national and proper instrument of public policy.

<sup>1</sup> K. F. Nowak, *Germany's Road to Ruin* (Trans. Dickes, 1932), pp. 301–2.  
P. Renouvin, *La Crise Européenne et la Grande Guerre* (1934), p. 68.

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Conrad was like hundreds of other general officers, except that he was more energetic, industrious, devoted to duty, and had more intellectual power, without being in the least broader in his view. He was always on the lookout for the opportunity to start a "preventive" war, or to take advantage of any crisis which seemed to indicate that the political and military situation in Europe was "favourable." Franz Ferdinand, the heir to the Austro-Hungarian thrones, himself a keen soldier, was indignant with the Chief of the General Staff's incessant hunting for opportunities for a preventive war. During the 1909 crisis he wrote to his military secretary, Colonel Brosch: "Please do tame Conrad. He is to cease this war-mongering. . . . Let him work all night at his preparations, but not stir up war."<sup>1</sup>

In 1909 the advice he had been for so long urging on Count Aehrenthal, the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister, seemed certain to be accepted; the preventive war against Serbia (to involve ultimately Russia and Germany) was to be undertaken. The Chief of the General Staff, however, was baulked by the action of the Serbian Government which, in deference to the advice of the Powers, relinquished its attitude of protest against the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. During the crisis, however, Conrad, and his *vis-à-vis*, Moltke, the chief of the German General Staff, had induced their respective Foreign Offices to engage in a correspondence which resulted in a military convention. This was contained in a letter of Moltke, dated January 21, 1909, declaring: "I believe that in the first place the advance of Austria into Serbia would bring about an eventual active intervention of Russia. With this the *casus foederis* would be given for

<sup>1</sup> Th. v. Sosnosky, *New Light on Franz Ferdinand* in *The Contemporary Review*, July 1930, p. 65.

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Germany" (*mit diesen würde der Casus foederis für Deutschland gegeben sein*).<sup>1</sup> This declaration was a distinct extension of the Austro-German Alliance of 1879 which was "purely defensive," the *casus foederis* to come into force "should one of the two Empires be attacked by Russia."<sup>2</sup> General Staffs, apparently, do not like such narrow commitments; Conrad and Moltke did not rest until they had obtained leave from their Governments to make their tremendous and fateful extension of the alliance.

When Italy went to war with Turkey in 1911 over the Tripoli question, Conrad thought that his hour had come, and he again urged Count Aehrenthal to seize the occasion—this time his object was to settle accounts with Italy. Aehrenthal refused, however, and made Conrad resign (temporarily) from the position of Chief of the General Staff.<sup>3</sup> By 1914 Aehrenthal was dead; and this time Conrad's hour really came. When the Archduke Franz Ferdinand was assassinated at Sarajevo on June 28, 1914, Conrad seems to have had no difficulty in persuading Count Berchtold, Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister, to seize the "favourable" moment for undertaking a preventive war against Serbia, even at the risk (or with the certainty) of bringing in Russia. The German Government, in undertaking to support Austria in the event of Russian intervention, recognized exactly the *casus foederis* of the Moltke-Conrad "convention" of 1909.

The "Military Operations" section of the British War

<sup>1</sup> Conrad, *Aus meiner Dienstzeit*, I, p. 379.

<sup>2</sup> Austro-German Treaty of October 7, 1879, preamble and Article 1, cf. B. E. Schmitt, *The Bosnian Annexation Crisis in The Slavonic Review*, April 1932, and Pribram, *The Secret Treaties of Austria-Hungary* (1920), I, p. 27.

<sup>3</sup> *British Documents on the Origins of the War*, IX, p. 343 (Eardley-Russell to Cartwright, December 1, 1911).

## *General Staffs and Diplomacy*

Office, which was more or less equivalent to a Continental General Staff, seems to have had the same restlessness of spirit as Conrad and Moltke, the quenchless desire to prepare for contingencies by filling out the understandings or agreements of their Governments with wider, and more explicit, engagements. The Franco-British Entente of 1904 involved an obligation on the part of the British Government to afford France diplomatic support in regard to her position in Morocco. In 1905 there occurred the serious "Morocco Crisis," after the visit of the Emperor William II to Tangier in March. The German Government, in effect, demanded that France should agree to her claims and those of other Powers in Morocco being considered in a Conference of all the interested states. M. Delcassé, the French Foreign Minister, stood for the rejection of this demand; and rejection would have involved war. M. Rovier, the French Premier, however, and the rest of the French Cabinet refused to agree with M. Delcassé on this point; M. Delcassé resigned (June 6, 1905), the Conference was held (at Algeciras), and the war was averted. While the crisis was going on, and war seemed possible or probable, some conversations may have taken place between French and British Staff Officers: "The very fear of such talks taking place was what determined Rovier and his colleagues to throw Delcassé overboard."<sup>1</sup>

Although there may have been informal and unofficial conversations between French and British officers in the time of M. Delcassé concerning means of military co-operation, it was not until the end of the year (1905) that a definite policy of military conversations and understandings seems to have been taken into consideration. Major Huguet took

<sup>1</sup> From a letter of M. Halévy to Sir George Aston, 1932, in *The Quarterly Review*, April 1932, p. 372.

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up his position as military *attaché* at the French Embassy at London in December 1904. His early investigations and observations led him to the conclusion that the British army would not be of value in a Continental war, because it would not arrive in time for the decisive battle. The British Staff Officers, however, did not share this opinion; and Huguet was willing to discuss possibilities with them. In December 1905 he approached Major-General Grierson (Director of Military Operations) when they were riding in Rotten Row. Communications between Huguet and Grierson about methods of military co-operation were initiated or continued through the medium of Colonel Repington, who was no longer in the army but was well known to several high officers. Neither the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs nor the Secretary of State for War were informed of these communications. A change in Government had just occurred; a Liberal Government had come into office. The new Prime Minister, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, thought of abolishing the Committee of Imperial Defence, but actually decided to retain it. On January 5, 1906, a meeting was held at the office of the Committee in Whitehall Gardens. There were present Lord Esher, a member, Sir George Clark (later Lord Sydenham), Secretary of the Committee, and Colonel Repington. Questions were prepared for Huguet to take over to France. Particularly, it was inquired whether France would guarantee that she would not invade Belgium first; and how, if the German army invaded Belgium, could the British army co-operate with the French. Huguet took the list of questions to Paris. The French General Staff, which was engaged in working out a plan for the invasion of England, was "agape with astonishment" at the prospect of a British army crossing the Channel. Naturally, they energetically took up the idea.

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On January 12th Huguet was back with satisfactory answers from the French General Staff; and on January 15th Grey, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, being informed that unofficial communications had been in progress, authorized direct conversations, non-committal and provisional, between Grierson and Huguet. That Grey did not know and "did not want to know" what the French and British Staffs were saying to each other does not release him from responsibility; it only means that he delegated some of his responsibility to the War Office. The French and British Staffs were communicating to each other their mobilization time-tables and programmes and were allocating areas and duties, in the event of war, to their respective armies. General Henry Wilson, Director of Military Operations at the British War Office, entered in his Diary, under the date September 29, 1911, after a conference with the French General Staff at Paris that day: "By 12.30 I was in possession of the whole of their plan of campaign for their northern armies, and also for ours."<sup>1</sup> This did not amount to a formal alliance, and in 1912 the two Governments exchanged notes, declaring that "consultations between experts is not, and ought not to be regarded as, an engagement that commits either Government to action in a contingency that has not arisen and may never arise." Nevertheless, the non-binding arrangements, agreements, conventions (whatever they may be called) of the British and French General Staffs obviously made joint action in the event of a European war probable and indeed likely; more especially as, in the 1912 exchange of notes already mentioned, the two Governments entered into an explicit engagement with each other to the effect that "if either

<sup>1</sup> Callwell, *Field-Marshal Sir Henry Wilson, His Life and Diaries* (1927.), I, p. 104.

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Government had grave reason to expect an unprovoked attack by a third Power, or something that threatened the general peace, it should immediately discuss with the other whether both Governments should act together to prevent aggression and to preserve peace, and if so, what measures they would be prepared to take in common." The General Staffs, acting in the initial stages without any authorization from their Governments, and thereafter with authorization but without knowledge of those Governments, not merely involved their countries in a *de facto* alliance, but decided how the alliance should operate—for instance, through the immediate dispatch of the British army to the Continent.

If the military conversations created an obligation of understanding and honour, the naval arrangements constituted an even more imperative obligation, so imperative that Grey, on August 3, 1914, while reserving the question of military help to France, straightway and unequivocally promised naval assistance. From 1912 Great Britain and France were bound in the closest of naval alliances, negotiated and concluded through the action of their Admiralties, without either the concurrence or knowledge of their Governments. In 1912 the British Admiralty withdrew the greater part of its Mediterranean forces, and concentrated its naval strength in the North Sea. The French Admiralty reduced its naval force in the Channel and adjacent waters, and concentrated its ships in the Mediterranean. There was, as far as is known, no specific agreement between the two Admiralties, but only decisions, taken and carried into effect at the same time (after conversations between representatives of the two Admiralties), each decision being obviously contingent on the other. Mr. Churchill, who was First Lord of the Admiralty at the time, writes that the British concentration in the North Sea would

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have been necessary, whether the French had undertaken the defence of the Mediterranean or not.<sup>1</sup> Obviously, however, the understanding between the two Admiralties enabled them to make far greater concentrations in their respective areas than, without such an understanding, they would have made. The British and French Governments also undertook, if there was a menace of war, to consult together. Field-Marshal Sir Henry Wilson, besides being "the life and soul" of the Anglo-French military conversations, was also a great champion of the policy of withdrawing the British fleet from the Mediterranean. According to his testimony, the decision of the Admiralty to make this concentration (involving, in effect, a naval alliance with France) was made without the knowledge of the Foreign Office or Cabinet, and without being discussed in the Committee of Imperial Defence.<sup>2</sup> In 1913 Great Britain was really fast bound by General Staff and Admiralty understandings. That this is so is proved by Grey's statement (made three times in his memoirs) that if the Government had not decided to go to the help of France, he would have felt it his duty to resign. It is proved still more conclusively by the guarantee given by Grey on behalf of the Government, while he was still maintaining that Great Britain's hands were free, to the French ambassador. The guarantee was: "If the German fleet comes into the Channel or through the North Sea to undertake hostile operations against French coasts or shipping, the British fleet will give all the protection in its power." The German fleet was sure to come through the Channel, and the British fleet was bound to oppose it. This would be war, on sea, and consequently on land. Great Britain "was no longer a sovereign state in 1914."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Churchill, *The World Crisis* (1923), I, pp. 112-13.

<sup>2</sup> *The Diaries of Sir H. Wilson*, ed. Callwell (1927), I, p. 113.

<sup>3</sup> McPhail in *The Quarterly Review*, July 1928, p. 25.

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If the Staff military and naval conversations and conventions, and Grey's admissions of responsibility for French security, still left any freedom of action to Great Britain in the crisis of 1914, there were apparently forces at work in the War Office and outside to prevent such freedom being used. General Sir Henry Wilson, Director of Military Operations in 1914, dined on December 2nd with the King, the Prince of Wales, and Lord Stamfordham, the King's Private Secretary. Lord Stamfordham remarked, "that I [Wilson] was more responsible for England joining the War than any other man." Relating this incident in his Diary, Sir Henry Wilson adds: "I think this is true."<sup>1</sup> He then proceeds to tell how he and certain friends brought pressure to bear on the responsible ministers, in order that they should not break through the long-standing arrangements for war which the irresponsible Staff officers had, so far as they could do so, already made. On July 28th Wilson enters in his Diary: "The news is all bad to-day, and war seems inevitable." He and his friends "began to suspect that the Cabinet was going to run away." So late in the afternoon he went to General Vicomte de la Panouse, the French military *attaché*, "and advised him to get Cambon to go to Grey to-night and say that, if we did not join, he would break off relations and go to Paris." On August 1st, at 7 a.m., Wilson saw Sir Arthur Nicolson, Permanent Undersecretary of State for Foreign Affairs, who showed him a dispatch indicating that the Germans were about to assume the offensive on both frontiers. When Wilson returned to his house, 7, Draycott Place, for breakfast, he met Mr. Leo Maxse, editor of *The National Review*, General Rawlinson, Lady Aileen Roberts, and Lady Sybil Grey there. Maxse wrote: "We then and there con-

<sup>1</sup> Callwell, *Field-Marshal Sir Henry Wilson*, I, p. 189.

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stituted ourselves a ‘Pogrom,’ as it was called, under the inspiration of the General [Wilson], whose service at this juncture is fully known on the other side of the Channel, though unknown here.” They got into touch with Mr. Amery, Mr. George Lloyd (afterwards Lord Lloyd), Mr. Wickham Steed (of *The Times*),<sup>1</sup> and Lord Lovat. Mr. Lloyd undertook to fetch Mr. Bonar Law, Leader of the Conservative Party, from the country. Other Conservative leaders were brought together. “So, at noon on the 2nd, Bonar Law’s famous letter, drafted after consultation with Lord Lansdowne and Mr. Chamberlain, was sent to Downing Street.” The letter assured the Government that it would have the support of the Opposition in engaging in the War. Maxse’s view of the Crisis and the decision to go to war is expressed thus: “Speaking as one knowing what he [Wilson] did in the opening days of that sultry August, I remain lost in admiration of his wonderful nerve and verve and unrelaxing grip of a formidable situation.”<sup>2</sup> Thus the “debt of honour” involved in the Franco-British naval arrangements and the Staff conversations of the past few years was met. Wilson, as had happened with members of General Staffs in other countries, “had helped to incur that debt of honour which fell to others to be paid.”<sup>3</sup>

It looks as if the General Staffs of all the Great European Powers were taking control or trying to take control of policy in the crisis of 1914. The statesmen and diplomatists worked in conditions which, owing to the pressure of military and naval experts, can scarcely be called free. One of the gravest political errors of any Government, an act of perfidy

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 44–5.

<sup>2</sup> For the whole episode, see Callwell, *Field-Marshal Sir Henry Wilson, His Life and Diaries* (1927), I, pp. 152–4.

<sup>3</sup> McPhail in *The Quarterly Review*, July 1928, p. 25.

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done against its better judgment from which it never recovered, was committed when Bethmann-Hollweg decided on the invasion of Belgium. The responsibility was his, not the Great General Staff's. It was the Staff's business to point out every possible means, according to the soldier's view, of winning the War, and to put forward their views with all the urgency that they deemed appropriate. It was the Chancellor's responsibility to decide between the claims of morality, politics, diplomacy, strategy. Count Schlieffen, the author of the plan for the invasion of Belgium, apparently never thought that it would be used for an unprovoked attack upon that state. Bismarck had written in 1888 that Germany would not violate Belgian neutrality, and that political leadership in Germany was not subservient to the General Staff. Bülow, as Chancellor, at the time of the Russo-Japanese War, asked if Schlieffen agreed with these statements of Bismarck made nearly twenty years earlier. "Of course," answered Schlieffen. "We have not grown stupider since then."<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, in 1914 Bethmann-Hollweg, wringing his hands with remorse and regret, allowed himself to be persuaded into the violation of Belgian neutrality. "France could wait, we could not," he feebly explained in the Reichstag. "Thus we were forced to ignore the rightful protests of the Governments of Luxembourg and Belgium. The wrong—I speak openly—we thereby commit, we will try to make good as soon as our military aims have been attained."<sup>2</sup>

The same inability of the Chancellor to use his independent judgment in relation to the General Staff is seen dramatically in the "unrestricted submarine campaign" question at the end

<sup>1</sup> Bülow, *Memoirs*, III, p. 75.

<sup>2</sup> Speech of the Imperial Chancellor in the Reichstag, August 4, 1914. English translation in *Collected Diplomatic Documents* (1915), p. 438.

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of 1917. President Wilson had dispatched a "Peace Note" to the belligerents on December 21, 1916. The German Chancellor, Bethmann-Hollweg, was in communication with him throughout the next four weeks. On January 19, 1917, however, at a meeting of the Imperial German War Council at Pless, Bethmann-Hollweg being present, the decision was taken to declare unrestricted submarine warfare. Bethmann-Hollweg knew that the decision was ill-advised and would lead to the United States entering the War with all its forces against Germany; but the "Supreme Command" said that unrestricted submarine warfare was necessary, and Bethmann-Hollweg, in an agony of doubt and depression, gave way. Shortly afterwards, a friend found the Chancellor sitting at his table, his head on his hands, in the deepest dejection. When the friend asked Bethmann why he did not resign rather than consent to a course which he believed certain to prove disastrous, Bethmann replied in agonized tones to the effect that he had been persuaded to continue in his office because a change in the Chancellorship was not in the public interest. Prince Max of Baden, who knew Bethmann-Hollweg well and admired him, puts the blame partly on him but more on the Supreme Command. "I am not blind to his weaknesses. I know that the fatal decisions which were forced on him against his better judgment will lift up an accusing voice before the bar of history—a voice which will have less to say of the military resistance which confronted the statesman than of the will which was not strong enough to break it. Bethmann-Hollweg could have gained control of public opinion if the Supreme Command had supported him—and he could have carried the day against the Supreme Command if he had had a backing in public opinion." This is not an exoneration of the Chancellor. Public opinion is elusive, and

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may escape the control of the strongest statesmen; but the General Staff is a concrete body which the civilian statesman, who after all has the law of the constitution on his side, can command, if he has knowledge, will-power, and self-confidence. Bethmann only had knowledge.

## CHAPTER IX

### PRIME MINISTERS AND FOREIGN SECRETARIES

THE rise of democracy has had a profound effect upon the conduct of foreign affairs in every country, an effect which the "classical" writers on diplomacy regret, or even deplore. Regrets are vain, for democracy has come to stay, at any rate for a considerable time and in most countries. The important thing, therefore, is not simply to have regrets (which in any case are disputable) for what has passed away, but to enable democracy to see clearly the tendencies which it has set in motion, and how it may control them. The political position and conditions of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs afford some illustrations for this purpose.

In the independent states of Europe from the time of the Renaissance, the monarch (or, in republics, the chief magistrate) had charge of foreign affairs as, ultimately, of all other affairs of state. The monarch, however, had many categories of state affairs to supervise. He therefore had an assistant, helper, or minister, to relieve him and to transact some of his work. This official, called in various countries Chancellor, Minister of State, First Minister, Secretary, came to be known ultimately in Great Britain as Prime Minister.

Throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the English monarch retained effectively the direction of foreign affairs. Henry VII, Henry VIII, Elizabeth, James I, Charles II, William III, definitely made England's foreign policy during their reigns. Under Anne the chief minister (Godolphin, Harley) began to develop into a Prime Minister; and within a few years after the accession of the House of Hanover,

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the Prime Minister, in the person of Walpole, definitely appears. The monarch has become "constitutional"; and the Prime Minister, supported by his party and Cabinet, makes policy.

Walpole, who, in fact if not in name, was Prime Minister from 1721 to 1742, kept the control and to a large extent the conduct of foreign affairs in his own hands. There was a Secretariat of State through which foreign correspondence passed, and which was divided into a Northern and a Southern Department, according as the states in correspondence were considered to be in the north or south of Europe. The Secretary of State, or the two Secretaries of State, were as strictly subaltern to the Prime Minister as the chief minister himself had formally been a subaltern of the sovereign. The only Secretaries of State between 1720 and 1805 who really impressed themselves upon foreign policy in an independent manner were Carteret and Chatham. As Prime Ministers, Walpole, North, Shelburne, and the younger Pitt dominated the foreign policies of their Governments. It is only after the death of Pitt in 1806 that the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs acquires a powerful and sometimes a dominating position in the foreign counsels of his country.

The Prime Ministers in the twenty years after Pitt were not very dominating men. The Tory party leaders found that Government worked well when a competent, conciliatory nobleman was Prime Minister, while the forceful and sometimes brilliant men were Secretaries of State. This system enabled a strong Foreign Secretary like Fox in the Ministry of Lord Grenville, "All the Talents," from 1806 to 1807; like Canning in the Ministry of the Duke of Portland from 1807 to 1809; like Castlereagh in the Ministry of Lord Liverpool from 1812 to 1822; and like Canning again, under Lord

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Liverpool, from 1822 to 1827, to acquire enormous influence on the direction of the country's foreign affairs. The Prime Ministers did not "abdicate." Lord Liverpool, for instance, exercised very real supervision over the conduct of foreign affairs, just as he did over the affairs which were in the particular charge of other ministers; but he never wanted to be his own Foreign Minister and to reduce the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to a subaltern's position.

This advance in power and dignity of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs was maintained on the whole throughout the nineteenth century. The long and only occasionally interrupted rule of Lord Palmerston at the Foreign Office (about sixteen years altogether) confirmed the system. In fact, the Foreign Secretary became rather too powerful in the time of Lord Palmerston, and in 1851 the Prime Minister, Lord John Russell, had to dismiss his independent colleague. When Lord Palmerston was himself Prime Minister he naturally had much influence upon foreign policy, and so he redressed the balance; in fact, although he did not take the office of Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs while he was Prime Minister (Lord Clarendon was Foreign Secretary in Palmerston's first Prime Ministry, Lord John Russell in the second) he was inclined to dominate the Foreign Office. Mr. Gladstone as Prime Minister was, as might be expected, strictly correct in relation to the law and custom of the Constitution. He was by no means a cipher in foreign policy, but his successive Secretaries of State for Foreign Affairs, Lord Clarendon, Lord Granville, Lord Kimberley, and Lord Rosebery, were anything but subalterns. They were the directing forces; the Prime Minister supervised.

Lord Beaconsfield as Prime Minister swung back to the system of the late eighteenth century and, without being

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Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, almost took foreign affairs into his own hands. Beaconsfield's letters in the Russo-Turkish crisis of 1877-78 show how he regarded foreign affairs as his personal and almost exclusive responsibility. He was not the adviser on foreign policy, he was the initiator. When Lord Derby, who was Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in 1877-78, showed that he had views of his own, he had to resign. Lord Salisbury, becoming Secretary of State in 1878 as a comparatively young man (48 years to Beaconsfield's 73), naturally accommodated himself to the dominating personality of his chief. At the Congress of Berlin Lord Beaconsfield represented Great Britain; Lord Salisbury, as Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, was at the Congress, too; but Beaconsfield was the very effective leader, the initiator, the negotiator. When Lord Salisbury became Prime Minister, he adopted his late master's method; he not merely took the leadership in the conduct of foreign affairs, but he became Secretary of State himself. He was Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs from 1885 to 1886, from 1886 to 1892, and from 1895 to 1900; and only when the double charge proved too much for his advanced years did he give over the seals of the Foreign Office to Lord Lansdowne.

When Mr. Balfour became Prime Minister in 1902, the balance which had prevailed in the early nineteenth century was restored. Mr. Balfour supervised and was helpful; but Lord Lansdowne, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, initiated and negotiated. This is probably the ideal system: an intellectual Prime Minister, capable of advising and controlling, but not anxious to dominate and direct, and ready to allow his competent Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, within the necessary limits, a free hand.

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Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, Prime Minister from 1906 to 1908, had an intimate knowledge of the Continent of Europe, and would have been an excellent Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. Unfortunately, his age and health rendered him unequal to assuming the double burden. Sir Edward Grey became Secretary of State, but Campbell-Bannerman kept in touch with the Foreign Office and minuted his remarks on the dispatches.

In the Liberal Government, however, of 1908–16, an anomalous situation arose. The Prime Minister, Mr. Asquith, as far as can be judged from the volumes of papers which have been published,<sup>1</sup> seems to have kept, except on particular occasions, almost aloof from foreign affairs. The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Sir Edward Grey, was in complete charge. The Prime Minister, perhaps from a certain “indifference” or mental detachment that seemed to characterize his attitude to many things, let the balance swing away from him to the Foreign Secretary, who consequently seems to have become more and more dependent upon the advice and guidance of the high officials of the Foreign Office. In the volumes which have been published by the Government, the dispatches are commented upon and “minuted” very fully by the officials and by Grey, very occasionally by Campbell-Bannerman, but seldom, if ever, by Mr. Asquith.~

The result of this (as it appears) abdication of the Prime Minister in foreign affairs was deplorable. Instead of a steady control, there occur occasional interventions, and not always interventions by the Prime Minister. The most remarkable intervention, which gives the impression that something like chaos prevailed in the conduct of Great Britain’s foreign affairs, was the Mansion House Speech of Mr. Lloyd George,

<sup>1</sup> *British Documents on the Origins of the World War*, Vols. IV–IX, XI.

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on July 21, 1911, during the "Agadir" crisis. Volume VII of the British Documents has brought a searching light to bear upon this extraordinary action. Sir Edward Grey, the Foreign Secretary, was, of course, in charge of the negotiations with Germany concerning Morocco. The Prime Minister was conversant with the course of negotiations, but seems to have made no effort to control. Mr. Lloyd George, who was Chancellor of the Exchequer, suddenly made a public declaration which was regarded in Germany as a threat of war. Mr. Lloyd George, of course, did not act without authority; but the impulse, the suggestion to make the speech, did not come from the Foreign Secretary. Grey knew of the plan for the speech, and approved of it, but he writes, "I did nothing to instigate it."<sup>1</sup> This is hardly the way in which the responsible Foreign Minister should let the foreign policy of his country be determined.

During Mr. Asquith's Prime Ministership it might be said that the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs was left by the Prime Minister completely in charge; at any rate the Prime Minister made no attempt to dominate. After the War the balance swung back to the Prime Minister in a most remarkable way.

Mr. Lloyd George was Prime Minister of the post-War Coalition Government down to October 1922. The Marquess Curzon was Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. Both were strong men. Mr. Lloyd George, since his unfortunate "Agadir" speech, had become deeply involved in foreign affairs during the War and in the Peace Conference of Paris. He had been in continual conference with the Prime Ministers, Foreign Ministers, Chiefs of Staff, and other directing men of the Allies. He had made policy, and settled the destinies of foreign

<sup>1</sup> Grey, *Twenty-five Years* (1926), p. 225.

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nations. After peace had been made there were still tremendous problems to be dealt with abroad, and Mr. Lloyd George felt that not merely the ultimate, but the primary and direct responsibility lay with him. Accordingly, during the remaining years of the Coalition, when foreign affairs were extremely "active," in regard to reparations, plebiscites, new frontiers, new states, Mr. Lloyd George was dynamic in policy; and not merely in policy, for he was incessantly active in the personal discharge of duties in foreign affairs, attending the European conferences and engaging directly in negotiation. Lord Curzon, while Mr. Lloyd George was Prime Minister, seems to have played as subordinate a rôle as Newcastle to Walpole, or, as in the German Empire, the purely departmental Imperial Foreign Minister did in relation to Bismarck. Many people were surprised that Lord Curzon, statesman, scholar, traveller, lifelong student of foreign affairs, was willing to subordinate himself so completely to the Prime Minister—almost, it might be said, to efface himself. The public credited him with a somewhat aristocratic temperament. Nevertheless, Lord Curzon seemed content with a secondary rôle in this period of his career; and within this limitation he certainly proved himself to be a hard-working, competent, and highly useful Secretary of State. When Mr. Lloyd George's Coalition Government fell in 1922, Lord Curzon remained at the Foreign Office in the Cabinet of Mr. Bonar Law. The balance was again adjusted. Mr. Bonar Law, a man of firm will, sound judgment, and of complete unselfishness, was almost an ideal Prime Minister; he gave to Lord Curzon the full latitude which Victorian Secretaries of State had been wont to enjoy, without in any way sacrificing his own ultimate responsibility and control. During this period Lord Curzon rose to heights of energy and statesmanship, in the difficult

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time of the Ruhr and at the Lausanne Conference on the Near Eastern Question, which are the best justification for Mr. Bonar Law's attitude.

The relations between Mr. Baldwin as Prime Minister and Sir Austen Chamberlain as Foreign Secretary were like those of Mr. Bonar Law and Lord Curzon. Sir Austen Chamberlain's was the directing force at the Foreign Office; Mr. Baldwin was the chief who advised and controlled, but did not interfere. When Mr. MacDonald became Prime Minister in 1925, he himself took the post of Foreign Secretary.

Mr. MacDonald bore the double burden of the Prime Ministry and the Foreign Office during the long and critical period when the Ruhr episode was being liquidated, and when the London Conference on Reparations and the Dawes Plan was being held. The result, so far as Reparations and the "German" Question were concerned, was a great personal success for Mr. MacDonald and a very great alleviation for a time of Europe's troubles. Given plenty of time, Mr. MacDonald might be called an ideal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. No praise could be too high in commendation of the patience, tact, knowledge, and breadth of view with which he presided at the difficult Conference of London. On the other hand, the negotiations for a general, chiefly financial, settlement with Soviet Russia were unsuccessful. The conduct of these negotiations and the draft treaty (not ratified) which resulted, were justly criticized by thoughtful observers. The negotiations were not in Mr. MacDonald's hands, but were given over to the Parliamentary Undersecretary of State. The result was unfortunate. The talents of Mr. MacDonald (who with M. Briand) may well rank as the best Foreign Minister of his age, were lost to his country and to the world in regard to the Russian negotiations because,

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being also Prime Minister, he could not spare the time. It would appear that the union of Prime Ministership and Foreign Secretaryship is too much for one man to cope with; and in his second and third Cabinets MacDonald was only Prime Minister.

From a survey of British Governments in the last two centuries one or two conclusions might be drawn. There is a danger of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs being overshadowed by the Prime Minister, and being reduced to the position of a "subaltern." This is detrimental to the dignity of the Secretary of State, and so would tend to diminish his due influence among his colleagues, the Foreign Ministers of other states.

There is equally a tendency for the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to "escape" altogether from the Prime Minister, either because the Prime Minister is too busy to keep in close touch with the Secretary of State, or because he feels that he does not know enough about foreign affairs. Left to himself, the Secretary of State may become too powerful in the conduct of foreign affairs; or he may become too dependent upon the views and information supplied to him by the permanent officials of the Foreign Office, as Grey was during Mr. Asquith's Prime Ministership.

The ideal relation seems to have been that of Lord Liverpool and Castlereagh (from 1812 to 1822); of Sir Robert Peel and Lord Aberdeen (from 1840 to 1846); of Mr. Gladstone and Lord Granville (from 1870 to 1874); of Mr. Bonar Law and Lord Curzon (in 1922-23); of Mr. Baldwin and Sir Austen Chamberlain (from 1924 to 1929). In all these instances the Prime Ministers were strong men, with a profound, or at any rate considerable, knowledge of foreign affairs, but they had no desire to dominate or initiate policy at the Foreign Office.

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The Secretaries of State, on their side, were men of outstanding knowledge and experience in foreign affairs, firm-minded, statesmanlike, but not self-assertive. They could work loyally with a Prime Minister who did not desire to dominate them, without their sacrificing their personality.

The two great dangers which threaten the Foreign Minister in democratic states are firstly that he will be changed frequently, secondly that he will be inexperienced in foreign affairs. The second danger has, on the whole, been avoided in most countries. Foreign affairs are an attractive study; and when Cabinets are being formed it has not proved difficult to find a man of ministerial standing who had the requisite knowledge. The other danger—that the rise and fall of Cabinets may involve so quick a succession of Foreign Ministers as to make for instability in the conduct of foreign affairs—has not been altogether avoided. In British politics there is a generally recognized convention that foreign policy is “outside” party policy. This convention, naturally, is not rigid; it would be intolerable if a political party, which came to power according to the Constitution, could not consider itself entitled to have views on foreign affairs. The doctrine or convention of “continuity,” like every other political doctrine or convention, is only tolerable if reasonably and tactfully applied.

In any case, frequent changes in the position of Foreign Minister of any great state have obvious inconveniences at home and abroad, even if they do not lead to abrupt changes of policy. British Cabinets, under the old two-party system, have had, on the average, reasonably long lives, so difficulties caused by frequent changes in the tenure of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs have, so far, not occurred; if a three-party system established itself in Great Britain,

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Governments may not last so long. In the states of Continental Europe, where politics are conducted by numerous groups, Cabinets are less stable than in England. The average life of a French Cabinet is only a few months. On the Continent also, however, there is a kind of consensus of opinion that, within limits, foreign policy is outside parties or groups. There is a tendency to regard the Foreign Minister as an "expert" as well as a statesman, and to continue him in office throughout the period of successive Cabinets. Thus M. Briand was French Foreign Minister for about eleven years altogether; Cabinets fell and were remade, but the new Prime Minister asked M. Briand to remain. Similarly, Dr. Stresemann was German Foreign Minister from 1923 to his death in 1929 in many successive Cabinets. M. Beneš has been Foreign Minister of Czechoslovakia since 1918. Nobody can fail to be convinced of the enormous benefit which their countries—and all Europe—obtained from the continuity in office of these three ministers, amid many changes of party, and amid the rise and fall of Cabinets. If the ideal British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs could be found (there is a fairly large choice of suitable men), one who is not too much of a "party man," the experiment of keeping him in office under two or three successive Prime Ministers might be tried with good result.

## CHAPTER X

### THE FOLLY OF SUDDEN DIPLOMACY

A DIPLOMATIC success is highly prized by every Government, for it means something gained in the world of great affairs, and gained without cost, without war, even without having to engage extra staff; for the diplomatist works quietly and economically—tongue, pen, and brain are all that he requires. The value of a diplomatic success is enhanced in the eyes of the Government which achieves it, if there is something sudden and dramatic about it. This arouses general interest and pleases the people.

Governments and ministers are prone to attempts at “sudden” diplomacy if they are actuated by vanity (this has occasionally happened), or if they are weak at home, or if they are not very sure of their ground abroad. Vain ministers have tried to “bring off” a sudden success, because it proclaims their cleverness to all the world, and means that they have outwitted somebody. Weak Governments do it, because it strengthens their domestic position; Governments uncertain of their ground abroad, because they trust that foreign Powers, which might reject a proposal, will accept an “accomplished fact.”

Nevertheless, sudden diplomacy is the worst that can be practised. It always offends somebody, some state or states; and every offence has to be paid for some time or another. It is always tactless; it is generally maladroit and, owing to changing circumstances, ill-timed. If it is done in order to discount foreign opposition and to face possible opponents with a *fait accompli*, it is dishonest. And although one or two

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instances of apparently successful villainy can be adduced in diplomatic history, nobody will hold this up as a model. Indeed, if an act or scheme is dishonest, it is not diplomacy, which is essentially a peaceful thing; dishonesty and peace never go together for long. Lord Grey in his memoirs, which are very enlightening on the mechanism of foreign affairs, declares that "a diplomatic score always has to be paid for." Diplomacy, aiming at peace and goodwill, is essentially a moral thing, and responds to a vital need. The biographer of Lord Salisbury writes: "Diplomatic work attracted him for its essential sincerity. In home politics phrases rule." Its humanity, in every sense of the word, was the attraction of diplomacy for Lord Salisbury. "He felt it in common with every man who is gifted with a modicum of imagination and acquaintance with past history, and an intellectual concern in the destinies of his fellow-creatures."<sup>1</sup> Sudden diplomacy is not of this kind. It is reckless.

The "suddenness" of this reprehensible kind of diplomacy lies not in the fact that it is sprung upon the public, but that it is sprung upon the other Governments. Examples are fairly numerous from 1833. In that year the Russian Government surprised all the European Chancelleries and Foreign Offices with the Treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi. This was a close alliance of Russia and the Porte, which almost converted Turkey into a protectorate of the Tsar. Russia, of course, had a perfect legal right to make the treaty if the Turks agreed; but if any indication of the negotiation had been given beforehand, the other Powers would certainly have brought pressure to bear upon Turkey to make her reject it. On the other hand, once the treaty was made, France and Great Britain would probably not go to the length of making war in order to undo it. This

<sup>1</sup> Lady G. Cecil, *Life of Robert, First Marquis of Salisbury*, III, p. 201.

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sort of calculation is infinitely irritating to the Governments which are presented with the *fait accompli*. They submit, probably, but they do not forget. The spectacular success of the Unkiar-Skelessi treaty turned out to be quite valueless, for when an occasion arose in 1839 for claiming from Turkey the benefit of the alliance, other counsels prevailed, and the Tsar consented to let the treaty expire. Nevertheless, it had to be paid for. The Crimean War was due, in part at any rate, to the suspicion in the minds of France and England that the designs of the Tsar Nicholas in 1854 in regard to Turkey amounted to a virtual protectorate, like that hidden under the Treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi.

Russia was not the only offender. Palmerston, who led the opposition to the Treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi, employed the method of "*fait accompli* diplomacy," with the result that he all but provoked a European war. The Sultan's powerful vassal, Mehemet Ali, was at war with his master in 1840, and might have overthrown the Sultan, had not the Powers intervened. Having checked Mehemet Ali, however, division began to appear among the Powers. The French Government wished Mehemet Ali to be left in possession of Egypt and Syria; the British Government wished him to have Egypt only. The question remained in dispute for months until one day, July 17, 1840, Palmerston made an appointment at the Foreign Office with the French ambassador and showed a treaty signed and sealed two days earlier by the four Powers—Great Britain, Russia, Prussia, and Austria—France being left out and ignored. Far from acquiescing in this treaty, which settled the Mehemet Ali question according to the English view, France prepared to go to war; and the only thing that she seemed doubtful about was whether she should direct her main attack against Prussia or England. "Be assured," said

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Thiers to an unofficial British diplomatist, David Urquhart, "that every means within the disposition of France . . . every armé that belongs to her, will be employed and will perish, before France will submit." Even the calm and judicious Alexis de Tocqueville considered "the treachery of Lord Palmerston" to be manifest. Thiers felt, in the face of the sudden, insulting blow of Palmerston, that there was no way out of the crisis except by war, although he confessed to David Urquhart: "I feel indeed that all our differences and our struggles are heedless and insane, and that a fearful overflow awaits Europe."<sup>1</sup> Palmerston, of course, was, as always, quite "jaunty." He wrote to Bulwer, British ambassador at Paris: "Convey to Thiers, in the most friendly and inoffensive manner possible, that if France throws down the gauntlet we shall not refuse to pick it up." Ultimately, however, peaceful counsels, represented mainly by the prudent old king, Louis Philippe, prevailed, and France consented to sign a new treaty, July 13, 1841 (of the Five Powers), which superseded, although it adopted the settlement of, the Four Power Treaty of 1840.

The most famous incident, and one of the most lamentable, was that of the "Spanish Marriages" in 1846. These marriages were wholly diplomatic. The first was celebrated between Queen Isabella II of Spain and her cousin, Don Francisco; the second between Princess Louise (sister of Queen Isabella) and the Duc de Montpensier, son of King Louis Philippe of France. Louis Philippe, through Guizot, had made an agreement in the previous year (September 8, 1845) that the Louise-Montpensier marriage would not take place until Queen Isabella was married and had an heir. The British Government, which set great store by the agreement, as preventing a French

<sup>1</sup> See G. Robinson, *David Urquhart* (1920), pp. 109, 113.

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succession to the throne of Spain, were dumbfounded to learn that on the same day, October 8, 1846, both marriages had been celebrated. This indeed was an accomplished fact, a piece of high diplomacy, *brusqué* by the French king, which Europe simply had to accept. There could be no undoing of it. Striking as was the momentary success which Louis Philippe achieved, it was momentary only. It never brought the crown of Spain to the Orleans family; but it lost the British alliance for Louis Philippe, and was one of the things leading to his downfall in the Revolution of 1848.

Napoleon III, whom peculiar early circumstances had turned into a conspirator and a designer of *coups d'état*, tried to face Europe with a diplomatic *fait accompli* in 1867. He was quietly arranging with the King of Holland to buy the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg from him. If the bargain were put through, Napoleon trusted ("sudden" diplomacy is always based on a gambling calculation) that Europe, and especially Prussia, would acquiesce. The Prussian Government, however, somehow came to know of the scheme, and persuaded the King of Holland to drop it. This rebuff to France nearly produced the war, from the French side, which a successful conclusion of the purchase would almost certainly have produced from the Prussian side. Fortunately, the British Foreign Secretary, Lord Stanley, convened a Conference of Ambassadors at London, and the dispute was settled by diplomacy. The Treaty of London, May 11, 1867, neutralized the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg after the manner of Belgium.

The Ems Telegram of Bismarck, 1870, belongs to a different category, for it was meant to end in a war, whereas sudden diplomacy, though it is a stupid and immoral way of conducting foreign policy, is always meant to end in a peaceful success. Russian diplomacy was sometimes inclined to be of

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this sort. In the winter of 1870, when the attention and much of the energy of Europe were absorbed by the Franco-German War, Gortchakoff, the Russian Chancellor, coolly sent a circular note to the Powers, announcing that the Russian Government would no longer be bound by that part of the Treaty of Paris which prohibited the fortification of the coast of the Black Sea or the sailing of warships on its waters. Sir Robert Morier, who called himself a *croyant de l'Église internationale* (meaning a passionate believer in international diplomacy), met Gortchakoff later at Wildbad in the Black Forest. The Prince, who had a good deal of genial humour, remarked that the opening of the Franco-German War had put an end to business in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and, finding time hang heavy on his hands, he had interested himself in the Black Sea Question. Morier was so shocked at this cynical way of referring to the Russian breaking of a European treaty that he could only mutter feebly, *vraiment?* A little later, however, Gortchakoff gave Morier an opportunity, by saying that he (Gortchakoff) had discovered a forged dispatch and that the forger, a diplomatist, had confessed to having composed it because he was at a dull post and had nothing to do. "Whereupon," writes Morier, "I gave a diplomatic laugh and exclaimed: *Ah, mon prince, n'est-ce point inoui ce que font les gens d'esprit quand ils n'ont rien à faire.*"<sup>1</sup> Gortchakoff, who perfectly understood the point of Morier's remark, laughed with great good humour, and the two parted excellent friends.

Great Powers, unfortunately, and even weak Powers, seldom fail to obtain some immediate material advantage from breaking a treaty (this is their reason for breaking it), but they cannot escape the moral odium of the respectable world nor the damage to their own character. The Powers, meeting in

<sup>1</sup> Wemyss, *Memoirs and Letters of Sir Robert Morier* (1911), II, pp. 279-80.

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Conference at London in January 1871, condoned Russia's breach of the Black Sea Convention, not indeed recognizing her unilateral repudiation of it, but incorporating it in a new treaty which all the Powers signed. They also insisted upon the joint signature of a protocol, in effect denouncing Russia's procedure:

The Plenipotentiaries of North Germany, of Austria-Hungary, of Great Britain, of Italy, of Russia, of Turkey, assembled to-day in Conference, recognize that it is an essential principle of the Law of Nations that no Power can liberate itself from the engagements of a treaty, nor modify the stipulations thereof, unless with the consent of the Contracting Powers, by means of an amicable arrangement.

The French Government, owing to its absorption in the hopeless task of prosecuting the war with Germany, omitted to send a representative to the Conference until later, but after arrival the French plenipotentiary made a declaration of adherence to the Protocol.

Gortchakoff's successful piece of villainy in 1870 may have been the model for the stroke of diplomacy by which Batoum was closed to foreign commerce in 1885. Article 59 of the Treaty of Berlin had made Batoum a commercial port; only on this condition would Lord Beaconsfield consent to its annexation by Russia from Turkey. On July 5, 1886, however, the Russian Government, which was inveterately protectionist and indeed exclusionist in commercial policy, simply informed the Powers by note that it had resolved to close Batoum. It was calculated that the Powers (or some of them), though they would protest, would not fight over the suppression without their consent of Article 59, one of the less important articles of the Treaty of Berlin. The union of Eastern Rumelia with

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Bulgaria in the previous year, by means of the Philippopolis revolution of September 1885, is yet another instance of this method of dictating (through the “accomplished fact”) a change in a diplomatic settlement, when the alteration would be difficult to obtain by consent. Lord Salisbury, who was on holiday at Puy when the news came, at once proposed a joint protest of the Powers. He found, however, that the Governments were sluggish, and so the Eastern Rumelian question was left to settle itself.<sup>1</sup>

There was a good deal of “sudden” diplomacy in the period 1896–1900 when something, almost amounting to a partition of China, was being carried out—seizure of Kaio-Chau, annexation of Port Arthur, Wei-hai-wei; but the grand and crucial instance is that of Count Aehrenthal and the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1908. The object aimed at was not in itself bad. Austria-Hungary had been authorized by Article 25 of the Treaty of Berlin, 1878, to occupy and to administer the two Turkish provinces of Bosnia and Herzegovina. By the year 1908 the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Office had come to the conclusion that it was time formally to annex the provinces, in order to eliminate the quite nominal, but inconvenient sovereignty of the Sultan there. This contingency had long been foreseen by the rest of Europe; and the Russian Government had, by secret agreements, consented long ago and more than once to the principle of annexation when it should take place.

The affair of Bosnia-Herzegovina was *brusqué* from one point of view, but from another was carefully prepared. With Russia and with Germany Count Aehrenthal, Austro-Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs, had preliminary conversations, and both Governments knew that he was going to

<sup>1</sup> Lady G. Cecil, *The Life of Robert, First Marquis of Salisbury* (1931), IV, p. 239.

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proclaim the annexation. The Russian Government, however, did not know the time when the annexation was to be announced, and it wanted a concession from Austria as a *quid pro quo*. The French, Italian, and British Governments were, or seemed, at the moment, disinclined to agree with the Austrian design to annex Bosnia-Herzegovina, so their leave was not asked. Nor was Russia's. A cool declaration that the two Turkish provinces were annexed was all that the Russian, French, Italian, and British Governments, parties to the Treaty of Berlin, received, October 8, 1908. They were presented with the accomplished fact, and obviously these Powers would not make a European war over the question; Germany, then guided by Prince Bülow, was steadily supporting Austria. The cynical Aehrenthal and Bülow scored a striking success in the public eye. Russia, which felt most aggrieved, submitted, but it could not submit twice, at any rate in the same decade. The success of Aehrenthal's diplomacy of 1909 was paid for by Austria in the World War of 1914 and the fall of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

In itself, the question was not very important. Bosnia-Herzegovina had been practically, though not formally, annexed by Austria-Hungary since 1879. The formal annexation could probably have been smoothly arranged beforehand by some careful preliminary diplomacy between Aehrenthal and all the other Signatory Powers of the Congress of Berlin.

The Austrian ultimatum of July 25, 1914, the immediate cause of the World War, was itself a piece of sudden diplomacy. It was known, of course, in the Foreign Offices of Europe, that Austria was going to do, or was likely to do, something, in order to clear up her relations with Serbia arising out of the murder of the Archduke. A Great Power is not bound to ask the permission of other Powers, even for so serious a step as

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the issue of an ultimatum. Germany, Austria's ally, was previously consulted. The *fait accompli* presented to Europe was not the sending of the ultimatum to Serbia but the irrevocable definition of its duration of forty-eight hours. When the terms of the ultimatum were made known, as they were immediately after it was delivered to the Serbian Government, pressure was put by the British, Russian, and French Governments upon Austria to induce her to extend the time limit. Although the Serbian Government was willing to accept most of the demands, there were one or two which it was unlikely to accept, at any rate in their present form; a few days of additional time might have given the opportunity for neutral diplomacy to find a "formula" or condition satisfactory to the honour of both Austria and Serbia. The Austro-Hungarian Government, however, was determined (there are documents to prove this)<sup>1</sup> that the ultimatum terms should be unacceptable, and that the two-day limit should not be extended. Thus Russia would be faced with the accomplished fact of a war between Austria and Serbia, and would, according to the Austrian calculation, probably let the local war go on, in Austria's favour, rather than precipitate a world war by intervention. Count Berchtold, the Austrian Foreign Minister, was, in fact, re-enacting something like the scene which Count Aehrenthal had staged in regard to Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1908. In 1914, however, the Entente Powers, or, at any rate, Russia, would not accept the *fait accompli*. Aehrenthal's *coup* of 1908, as Frederick the Great said of his own seizure of Silesia in 1740, was like one of those novels which are a great success, but of which the sequel is always a failure. It was sudden diplomacy which brought on the World War.

Since the close of the World War, diplomacy has tended to

<sup>1</sup> See B. E. Schmitt, *The Coming of the War, 1914* (1930), Chaps. IV and VI.

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act more in the public eye than before. The constitution and practice of the League of Nations, like Mr. Wilson's Fourteen Points, encourage open diplomacy. The diplomacy of *faits accomplis* is one of the most secret kinds of secret diplomacy. On the whole, democracy tends to discourage it, and the post-War age is (or was, during its first ten years) democratic. There have been, however, two pieces of post-War "sudden" diplomacy—the Treaty of Rapallo and the fiasco of the Austro-German Customs Union.

The Treaty of Rapallo was the *coup* of Rathenau, German Foreign Minister, and Tchitcherin, Russian People's Commissary for Foreign Affairs, made at the Genoa International Conference in 1922. The Rapallo Treaty, a commercial agreement of the normal kind between two neighbouring states, was in itself harmless, indeed beneficial all round, but it was negotiated in a very unfortunate way, by two Foreign Ministers, who were attending an international Conference to deal with the common good of Europe, drawing secretly apart, and then suddenly waving in the face of their amazed colleagues a separate, signed agreement. The Rapallo Treaty, being itself unobjectionable, could not be opposed by Europe, so the weak German Government gained its success in the public eye, though it lost much more by reason of the anger and suspicion aroused by its collusion with Russia at the Conference.

The project of an Austro-German Customs Union, 1931, had a far wider scope than the Commercial Treaty of Rapallo. The plan of such a union was in itself perfectly sound. It is in the interests of Austria and of Germany and of all Europe that a large economic unit or customs area should be formed. The terms of the proposed union did not merely make free trade between Austria and Germany, but also invited other

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states to join the union. All this was a matter which required very careful diplomatic preparation, and which, adequately prepared, might have gained the assent or approval of the Powers, and have formed the basis of a European union. Actually, it had no diplomatic preparation at all in regard to the Foreign Offices of Europe; and it is said that the Austrian Cabinet ministers themselves (except the Chancellor, who negotiated the agreement with Germany) were not previously informed.<sup>1</sup>

Diplomacy of this kind is always regarded internationally as brutal, and it arouses indignation, all the more if the *fait accompli* has to be accepted. In the case of the Austro-German Customs Union the *fait accompli* was not accepted; its makers were in a very different position from that of Count Aehrenthal and Prince Bülow when they "discounted" the opposition of Europe over Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1908. The Austro-German project had much to recommend it. Austria, the fragment of the great Austro-Hungarian Empire left over from the World War, was a weak state, almost incapable of independent economic existence. On March 19, 1931, the Austrian and German Governments signed a Protocol, agreeing to enter into negotiations to assimilate the tariff and economic policies of their respective countries. That these should be free trade between Germany and Austria was to the advantage of both countries, particularly, of course, of Austria; and as the Protocol was open for signature by any other country, which thereby would join the Austro-German Customs Union, the project, if fully utilized, would be economically beneficial to all Europe. Politically, however, it created intense alarm and surprise in France and in the states

<sup>1</sup> G. E. R. Gedye, *The Austro-German "Bombshell," Contemporary Review*, April 1931, pp. 546-7.

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of the Little Entente (Czechoslovakia, Serbia, Rumania). On this occasion the German Foreign Office could not repeat the success of the Treaty of Rapallo. France and the Little Entente, probably also Italy, were not prepared to remain passive before the *fait accompli*. Energetic protests and diplomatic pressure brought about the withdrawal of the Austro-German Protocol two days before the Permanent Court of International Justice at The Hague handed down an advisory opinion which, by a decision of a majority of the judges (eight against seven), reported against the project (September 5, 1931). The project of a Customs Union had to be abandoned; and the two weak Cabinets, Dr. Schober's of Austria and Dr. Brüning's of Germany, received a very serious shock to their *prestige*. This shock was all the more disappointing to them, as they had arranged their diplomatic *coup* partly in order to gain for reasons of domestic politics success in the eyes of their democracies.

The piece of diplomacy in which brusqueness or suddenness had perhaps the most unfortunate effect was the announcement of the "Hoover Moratorium," June 20, 1931. The economic constitution of Europe (and indeed also of the United States) had been growing steadily worse throughout the first half of the year. This was no secret to any observer; and Governments have at their command every means of obtaining sound information. In June the United States Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. Andrew Mellon, was travelling in Europe and sending reports to the President. Mr. Hoover, doubtless, had much to do at home, in convincing a sufficient number of Senators of the urgency of the crisis, before he could assume responsibility for the action which he meant to take. He had also abroad all the United States diplomatic service, and Mr. Mellon in addition; so he could easily and without any expendi-

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ture of his own time and energy have instructed the Secretary of State to prepare the way with foreign Governments by means of the American ambassadors in the capitals of Europe, if necessary with the help of Mr. Mellon. Actually, when Mr. Hoover made his proposal for a general suspension of Reparation payments and inter-state War Debts, the Governments of Europe appear to have been taken by surprise as much as the public. The President was evidently very much alarmed and excited at the near prospect which he seemed to discern (and probably correctly) of economic collapse in Europe; and after fifty hours of intense activity, conversations, interviews, messages (on the same day as he received a desperate appeal by telegram from President Hindenburg), he announced "in a hoarse voice" to the assembled members of one or other House of Congress that the American Government proposed the postponement during one year of all payments of inter-governmental debts, including Reparation payments (June 20, 1931).<sup>1</sup>

This is scarcely the way to conduct delicate, dangerous, and complicated international affairs. There were two simultaneous and opposing results. One was a feeling of immense relief and revival of hope among the harassed peoples and Governments who had hitherto found the way to world recovery blocked by the insistence upon payments of Reparations and inter-state War Debts. The other, and simultaneous, result was that the French Government, irritated and perhaps, still more, puzzled by the brusqueness and unexpectedness of Mr. Hoover's "bolt from the blue," stood aside for fifteen or sixteen days in order to consider what was implied. This delay spoiled the Hoover moratorium plan, robbing it of nearly all the good psychological result which it had at first.

<sup>1</sup> The Text of President Hindenburg's letter-telegram and of President Hoover's proposal are in Wheeler-Bennett, *Documents on International Affairs, 1931* (published 1932), pp. 114-15.

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The moratorium, it is true, was adopted; but in the period of waiting confidence had been diminished, and the economic situation had deteriorated. Feelings of gratitude which a ready acceptance of the moratorium by the creditor states would have evoked were conspicuously absent from the settlement that was ultimately made; and all this because diplomatic preparation had not been made by the United States President before he made his public proposal.

## CHAPTER XI

### CONSTANTINOPLE DIPLOMACY

BEFORE the War, Constantinople had rather a bad name among European diplomatists. In other capitals, the relations of the diplomatists with each other were always correct, and were usually also friendly. Generations, even centuries, of established policy and political traditions had eliminated the element of rivalry among the members of the diplomatic corps in Madrid, Paris, Vienna, Berlin, Rome, St. Petersburg, and the capitals of the smaller states. In 1700, as has been graphically described by Macaulay, there was an intense competition among the diplomatists for the favour of the moribund Charles II who had a whole empire, almost a whole world, to give away. The result was the celebrated bequest of the Spanish dominions to the grandson of Louis XIV of France, and the War of the Spanish Succession. Spain was the "Sick Man of Europe" at the end of the seventeenth century; but for two hundred years there have no longer been opportunities of this kind in Europe outside the Turkish Empire.

Even in Turkey, opportunities for purely political gains, as the result of competitive energies within the diplomatic corps, were to a great extent eliminated by the Crimean War. The peace-treaties which concluded that war contained a guarantee of the independence and territorial integrity of Turkey. The increasing industrialization of the European states and their growing need for overseas markets turned the attention of the diplomatists at Constantinople (or rather of the Foreign Offices who instructed the diplomatists) to possibilities of commercial concession. As the years passed away the diplomatist in

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Constantinople became, what he was nowhere else (except in Peking), involved in commerce as much as in politics. He had to obtain concessions—for railways, banks, loans, anything. It was work which the consuls could not perform, for it meant that political pressure had to be brought to bear upon high Turkish ministers to whom only ambassadors could normally have access. The ambassadors did not particularly like this kind of work. It was not that there was anything dishonourable about it; but diplomatists do not consider it their business to "serve tables." They are servants of the state, with national and also international duties, but these duties have always been regarded as political. The diplomatist is normally engaged in the "routine of peace," in making the political adjustments, small or great, through which the family of nations functions. But wherever there is a weak Government, in an undeveloped country, without capital of its own, but with opportunities for investment and profit, there is (or there was) almost a certainty that some Power would bring pressure to bear on that Government to secure a concession or business favour of the Power's nationals; and if one Power did this the others could scarcely help doing the same, otherwise their nationals would be shut out from business. Therefore if a German or British or French or Russian firm of contractors wanted to have the concession for constructing a railway in Turkey, the German or British or French or Russian ambassador, as the case might be, had to support the application of the firm by negotiation with the Turkish Government. When the application was for a concession which might contain political as well as financial or commercial advantages, like the Bagdad Railway Concession, a regular battle-royal would ensue among the embassies at Constantinople and among their Foreign Offices at home, and might endure for years.

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Naturally, when the ambassador of one Power was reporting upon the concessions made by the ambassador of another Power, it was always the other Power that was exercising undue pressure. Thus the British ambassador at Constantinople reported in 1907:

By dint of vigorous pressure, the Italian Embassy has secured for the firm of Ansaldos, in Genoa, an order for a cruiser. The action of the Italian ambassador in pressing the Turkish Government to commit this act of folly, which well illustrates the ineptitude with which the Turkish finances are administered, has provoked a good deal of unfavourable comment. The cruiser, when built, is destined, doubtless, to join the rest of the Turkish fleet rotting in the Golden Horn or at the Dardanelles. It should be mentioned that this order to Ansaldos violates a promise made by the Sultan some years ago to Armstrong's, that the next ship should be built by them. I have been careful not to allow His Majesty to lose sight of this fact, but I have not seen my way to press for an order for the British firm. I understand that the cruiser is not likely to be built in the near future; but, even if it is, I should be loath to make the commission of an act of folly by the Sultan an excuse for urging him to commit another. I have, however, made it known that His Majesty's Government expects compensation in one form or another for the violation of a promise given by the Sultan himself, and if any of our present British schemes take a practical shape, I hope to make use of this incident to press them.<sup>1</sup>

Evidently the methods and motives of the British ambassador, in spite of his declared scruples, were not markedly different from those of his Italian colleague.

The Sultan Abdul Hamid did not greatly relish all this diplomatic pressure though he had to put up with it, particu-

<sup>1</sup> *British Documents*, V, p. 47.

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larly in view of the fact that the Turkish Treasury was in chronic deficit and could not afford to quarrel with the foreign banks; for all the foreign banks were subject to advice from the foreign Governments. The Sultan was being pressed to give concessions which, in their ultimate effects, would not be merely commercial; for commercial concessions could lead, and indeed had led, to political influence. Abdul Hamid had the notion that the fate of the Boer Republics indicated a lesson for him. The British ambassador in his annual report for 1907 (already quoted) stated:

A French group possessing colliery rights in the Heraklia Valley is endeavouring, with the strenuous support of the French ambassador, to secure the consolidation of the various colliery interests in the district, but the project is meeting with great difficulties, not only because of the exorbitant terms asked by some of the parties concerned, but also because of the objections of the Sultan's Government. Although the French group have in mind the working of the coalfield by an Ottoman Company, the Company would, of course, be Ottoman only in name, and the Sultan, who is possessed with the idea that the gold-mines on the Rand led to the absorption of the Transvaal in the British Empire, shrinks from facilitating the development under foreign management of the richest coalfield in the country, which is at the same time accessible to Russia.<sup>1</sup>

The history of the Council for the Ottoman Public Debt showed that there was some connection between economics, diplomacy, and politics at Constantinople. "The Ottoman Public Debt Administration," a British Embassy Report stated in 1907, "though nominally a department of the Ottoman Government, is virtually a foreign control of the chief sources of revenue of the Empire."<sup>2</sup> In 1875 the Turkish

<sup>1</sup> *British Documents*, V, p. 48.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, V, p. 6.

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Government became bankrupt, with a public debt, mostly held by foreigners, of £191 million sterling. This situation was discussed at the Congress of Berlin in 1878, and finally in 1881 the Sultan, by the Decree of Mouharrem (December 20th), established the Council of Administration of the Ottoman Public Debt. By agreement with the bondholders the capital of the Debt was reduced to £106 million. The Council of Administration consisted of six members, a Frenchman, Englishman, Austrian, German, Italian, and Turk. The President was alternately an Englishman and Frenchman. The Sultan ceded certain revenues to the Council as security for payment of the interest on the Debt. By careful collection and administration of the ceded revenues, the Council greatly increased their yield, punctually paid the interest on the Debt, and handed over the balance to the Turkish Government. The peasantry, from whom the ceded revenues were collected, greatly benefited from the equitable assessments and regular collection of the Council. Although, as the British Embassy Report of 1907 said, the Public Debt Administration was "a foreign control," in practice neither the foreign Governments nor the Porte interfered with its operations. It was, in fact, the soundest element in the Turkish *régime*.

The foreign commissioners in the "Public Debt," though not enjoying diplomatic immunity, were in effect treated by the Turks, always tolerant when fanaticism was not aroused, as if they were privileged. When the Italo-Turkish (Tripoli) War broke out, the Italian commissioner was not disturbed until he made statements which appeared to the Porte to be un-neutral. Even in the Great War the Porte showed no inclination to interfere with the British and French commissioners, who, however, themselves decided to withdraw, doubtless on the advice of their own Governments. After the World War the

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Commission of the Administration of the Public Debt was reconstituted, by the Treaty of Lausanne, 1923, with much restricted powers, and with its seat no longer at Constantinople, but at Paris.

The effect of financial concessions upon the independence of an Oriental state may be judged from a transaction disclosed by a French diplomatist. In 1904, under the "goaded impulsion" (*l'impulsion aiguillonnante*) of Delcassé, the Sherifian Government (Morocco), which was bankrupt, signed a contract for a loan of 62,500,000 francs from a consortium of French banks. The loan bore interest at 5 per cent and was to be repaid over a period of thirty-six years. All the customs duties of the Sherifian Government were pledged as security for the loan, and the consortium of banks were to instal their own agents at the ports, to receive the customs revenue, and to supervise the strict application of the tariffs. In addition, the consortium was to have the privilege of supplying the future loans for the Sherifian Government. M. Paléologue noted in the journal which he kept at this time of important facts at the *Ministère des Affaires Etrangères*: "Henceforth, financially, Morocco is in subjection to us."<sup>1</sup>

The accusation of bribery and corruption was vaguely, though insistently, made regarding the Foreign Offices and officials of certain states, less socially advanced than the Western Powers, before the World War. Such charges can seldom be substantiated with evidence, because if a diplomatist has received information in an irregular manner from an official or semi-official source, he does not tell even his own Government how he obtained it. This reticence is understood, between the ambassador and his home Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to be part of the necessary diplomatic discretion. If the

<sup>1</sup> Paléologue, *Un Grand Tournant de la Politique Mondiale*, p. 100.

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ambassador divulged to his own Government the source of his information, he might compromise his informant and lose the prospect of information in the future. The Minister of Foreign Affairs would rather not know the source. The ambassador, therefore, merely reports home: "I have received from a reliable source. . . . My informant, who I have reason to believe is speaking from personal knowledge, declares . . ."

There is no doubt that in the nineteenth century, in the time of the decadence of the Ottoman Empire, there was a traffic in information. In 1833 Lord Ponsonby obtained from the Turkish Minister of War himself (who said that he divulged it from motives of patriotism) a copy of the Russo-Turkish Alliance Treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi. That bribery existed, not simply in regard to applications for concessions, but in matters of high politics, is indicated plainly in a message sent by Lord Salisbury to Sir William White at Constantinople during a crisis of the Eastern Rumelian Question in 1885: "I gather that you are at a disadvantage as being the only ambassador who does not pay one of the Sultan's Ministers. Do you think so? How much will it cost?"<sup>1</sup> An Austrian diplomatist, referring to the Balkan states before the War, declared that the obtaining of information in return for money was a well-known practice in diplomacy; and further, that occasionally even high officials were not unwilling to amplify (*arrondir*) their incomes by subsidies from foreign sources.<sup>2</sup> One diplomatist went so far as to declare confidentially to his Government that in Constantinople anything could be bought. Ignatiev, who was famous as Russian ambassador at Constantinople in the late eighteen-sixties, was able to furnish himself "with a fantastic

<sup>1</sup> Lady G. Cecil, *Life of Robert, First Marquis of Salisbury*, IV, p. 215.

<sup>2</sup> Szilassy, *Traité*, pp. 139-40.

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medley of agents and informers," and gained so much influence that he was called *le vice-Sultan*.<sup>1</sup>

It is impossible to say how much, if any, bribery was practised when diplomatic support was being applied in favour of applications for concessions. The ambassadors at Constantinople were not the kind of people who would normally engage in bribery. The business firms who were seeking concessions had means for financially benefiting Turkish officials, though it is doubtful whether, in the existing state of company law in most countries, this could have been commonly done, or on a large scale. In the British Embassy Report for 1907, Selim Pasha Melhamé, the Turkish Minister of Mines, Forests, and Agriculture, was described as having "arrested the natural development of the immense mineral resources of the country, while amassing very considerable fortunes for himself and the limited number of persons who have known how to identify their interests with his own." Another official, Said, son of the ex-Grand Vizier, Kiamil Pasha, was described as "corrupt and unscrupulous to the last degree." The influential Turkish Secretary-General for Foreign Correspondence, Mehmed Nourri Bey, was in effect just "a prominent centurion in the legion of Palace spies . . . corrupt and unscrupulous in the extreme." The Minister of War, Mehmed Riza Pasha, had, in the period of German ascendancy, made a large fortune, "which his relations with Essen (the German armament firm, Krupp) have contributed to build up." There were, however, upright officials in the service of the Sublime Porte. Kiamil Pasha, a Cypriot, twice Grand Vizier, was recognized as being honest and statesmanlike. The Legal Adviser in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was Ibrahim Hakki

<sup>1</sup> B. H. Sumner, *Ignatiev at Constantinople* in the *Slavonic Review*, April 1933.

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Bey; "though not entirely disinterested, he is not accused of venality."<sup>1</sup>

The intensity of diplomatic life and work at Constantinople was increased by the fact that practically all of Turkey's diplomacy was concentrated there. The Sublime Porte, of course, maintained embassies and legations at the capitals of Europe, but seems to have entrusted them only with ceremonial affairs. This policy of the Porte was due to its mistrust of its officials. If it had important business to transact with foreign Governments the Porte would rather do this at Constantinople, dealing directly with the resident ambassadors there, than deal through the distant Turkish ambassadors at foreign capitals. A curious result of this was that the Turkish ambassadors at the capitals of the Great Powers found it very difficult to fill their reports which they were obliged to dispatch weekly to the Porte. Lord Salisbury, when Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, used to receive at the Foreign Office visits from a depressed Turkish ambassador who besought his lordship to give him some piece of information or suggestion which he could put into his report. This was a waste of the Secretary of State's time, for his Turkish colleague had nothing to say and no information to give. Conversation under such conditions "lacked actuality." Nevertheless, "I don't like to refuse to see him," said Lord Salisbury, "as if I don't give him something to write home, they will probably dock his next month's salary."<sup>2</sup> All this meant, however, that there was an excessive pressure of diplomatic business always in process of transaction between the Porte and the Powers' ambassadors at Constantinople; and every ambassador had to be very alert,

<sup>1</sup> *British Documents*, V, pp. 13, 17, 20. All the quotations are from the Annual Report of 1907.

<sup>2</sup> Lady G. Cecil, op. cit., IV, p. 210.

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and to have his eyes very intently upon his colleagues, if he was not to be out-distanced, or left outside in some important affair.

It must be borne in mind, in considering the peculiar character of diplomacy at Constantinople before the War, that Turkish sovereignty was only a “polite fiction” then.<sup>1</sup> The Sultan had for centuries allowed foreign Powers and foreign nationals privileges, such as trial in their own Consular courts, and the right to have their own post offices. These privileges were originally conceded voluntarily, as a means of saving the Sultan trouble, or because he did not wish strangers to have the advantages of Turkish law; but in the long run they had become very serious restrictions upon Turkish sovereignty. The Turkish customs-tariff was determined by international agreement; and the Commissioners for the Ottoman Debt, which was an international body, controlled a substantial portion of the Turkish revenues. Turkey was thus really not a sovereign state, and was therefore all the more open to further diplomatic penetration by alert diplomatists, driven forward by their insistent Foreign Offices. Turkey, in fact, was in much the same feeble international condition as China, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, but was even weaker.

Also the diplomatic corps had not quite the degree of solidarity at Constantinople which it had at other capitals. It was not merely that it was divided by the rivalry of concession-hunting. The way in which they lived tended, in some respects, to separate the diplomatists of one country from the diplomatists of another. Every Power had, naturally, a fine house, where the ambassador could live in dignity and comfort. In other capitals, the secretaries and *attachés* in the diplomatic

<sup>1</sup> Earle, *Turkey, the Powers and the Bagdad Railway* (1924), p. 12.

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corps found houses or apartments for themselves, and the ambassador only saw them in his chancery, or when he occasionally invited them to dinner. At Constantinople, however, originally because suitable houses, apartments, or hotels were scarce, and perhaps because conditions of safety were not assured, the custom had grown up for the staff of the ambassador to be housed in the Embassy. The staff was the ambassador's official "family," and lived with him under the same roof. The Embassy staff, therefore, developed a very strong family feeling; it was a "solid" unit, and so was every other Embassy. As each Embassy staff lived by itself, met at meal-times, slept under the same roof, engaged in the unending Embassy gossip and conversation, it was almost cut off from all but the most ceremonial contact with other Embassy staffs. This fact, in the existing conditions of international rivalry at Constantinople, only increased the feeling of rivalry.

The Porte, though subjected to intense foreign pressure, did not entirely conform to the ways of the insistent Western diplomatists. All the high Turkish officials and all the foreign diplomatists spoke French, but the Porte refused to transact its diplomatic affairs in this language. All communications had to be made in Turkish. This rule came down from the seventeenth century when the arrogant Turks declined to recognize the Christian Powers on terms of equality. It was maintained in modern times, partly from conservatism, partly from caution; the Porte felt that it was less likely to be misled if it insisted on every communication being made in the Turkish tongue. Every Embassy, therefore, had to keep a dragoman, whose business it was to translate all communications from or into Turkish, and who accompanied the ambassador as interpreter in all his audiences. The dragoman of each Embassy, who might or might not be of the Embassy's nationality, naturally was a

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man of considerable influence, and required to be a person of high discretion.

Two things would have prevented Turkey from being made the battleground of somewhat sordid diplomatic struggles. One might have been a "Monroe Doctrine" for Turkey, if some Great Power could have claimed Turkey for a sphere of influence and could have had this claim recognized by the other Powers. Russia had once had such an ambition and had boldly tried to achieve it by the Treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi in 1833, when she obtained, on paper, a protectorate of Turkey; and later, in 1854, when she again claimed a protectorate, this time over all the Orthodox subjects of the Sultan. The Crimean War, however, had destroyed Russia's chances of establishing a protectorate in practice over Turkey. If Russia were not permitted to hold this position, no other Power could make the claim and expect to be recognized. At the end of the World War, the United States was offered, by the Supreme Allied Council at Paris, the "mandate" for Constantinople, but the offer was declined.

If the first possibility, a "Monroe Doctrine" for Turkey, was ruled out of account, a self-denying ordinance, such as prevails among the Western Powers in regard to China, might have been adopted. All the Powers could have agreed among themselves not to ask the Porte for political or commercial advantages for themselves, but to leave a fair field and no favour for all parties. Such an agreement was, apparently, never proposed; had it come into existence there would have been great difficulty in securing its observance, particularly if Turkey had continued to be a weak state, almost inviting ambassadorial pressure by its weakness.

The diplomatic history of the Armenian question shows how things were managed at Constantinople. This unfortunate

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people, in spite of age-long persecution intensified at times to massacre, displayed a tenacity and cohesion that is simply astounding. At the end of the War of 1877-8, the Russian Government meant to do something for them; and in the Treaty of San Stefano which it imposed upon Turkey on March 3, 1878, it stipulated (Article 16) that the Turkish Government should put reforms into effect in Armenia. The wording of this Article implied that Russian troops would not evacuate the occupied territory in Armenia until the reforms had been carried out in practice. Unfortunately the Congress of Berlin suppressed this Article, along with others, of the Treaty of San Stefano, and substituted simply an undertaking by the Porte to carry out the improvements and periodically to make known to the Powers the steps taken to this effect (Article 61). There being no guarantee of the execution of this Article, the Porte ignored it, and never even pretended to make the periodical reports.

The Powers, or certain of them, from time to time demanded that the Porte should execute Article 61 of the Treaty of Berlin; and sometimes they were so far united and insistent that they presented a collective note. All this had no effect, and in 1894 and 1895 frightful massacres occurred in Armenia. In 1896 the massacre of Armenians was carried on at Constantinople itself. There appears to be no doubt whatever that this was done not merely with the connivance, but at the actual instigation of the Sultan Abdul Hamid. In these three frightful years there was no country of Europe pressing its view on the Sultan. Great Britain, France, and Russia acted together forming what was called the "Armenian Triple Alliance." Lord Grey in his memoirs has written that the German Government did nothing because it did not wish to lose the favour of the Sultan by "bothering" him over the Armenians. This statement

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is not quite correct. The German ambassador at Constantinople gave good advice to the Sultan to improve "the notoriously bad administration of his frontier provinces."<sup>1</sup> But the German Government would not press its view upon the Sultan beyond a certain point, for it feared that under pressure the Turkish Empire would break up. If the German Government had to choose between *Reforms* and *Turkey*, it would choose the latter, since it had "no apparent interest in the break-up of Turkey."<sup>2</sup> The people of Great Britain, a country enjoying, geographically, as Lord Salisbury said, "splendid isolation," could afford to take a detached view of circumstances in Turkey and to press its humanitarian views upon the Sultan.<sup>3</sup>

From these facts it will be seen that the diplomats at Constantinople seldom, if ever, really spoke with a united voice. Every Foreign Office wanted, if not an alliance with Turkey, at any rate concessions—for railways, battleships, roads, and other contracts which could be counted upon to be wasteful and lavish. Turkish sovereignty might be only a "polite fiction"; but European civilization, as represented by the diplomacy at Constantinople of the Great Powers, had become largely a matter of concession-hunting. The fall of the Sultan (1922), the consolidation of the Turkish Republic, and the reforms of Mustafa Kemal—though going rather far in the direction of economic nationalism—have at any rate put a stop to the contests for concessions.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Die Grosse Politik der Europäischen Kabinette*, IX, p. 209.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, X, p. 46.

<sup>3</sup> The phrase "splendid isolation" occurred in a passage concerning the attitude of the Powers towards the Armenian Question, in a speech delivered by Lord Salisbury at the Guildhall in November 1896. See Lady G. Cecil, *The Life of Robert, First Marquis of Salisbury*, IV, pp. 85–6.

<sup>4</sup> See T. L. Jarman, *Turkey* (1935), pp. 107–21.

## CHAPTER XII

### PAPAL DIPLOMACY

THE problem of the relations of Church and state in the eighteenth century was seldom acute. In Germany the principle of *Cujus regio ejus religio* had, for the most part, resulted in a control of the church or churches of each state by the monarch of the state. In the prince-archbishoprics of the Rhineland, Mainz, Trier, Cologne, there was a perfect union of Church and state. In France the "reasonable" high clergy acquiesced in the "Gallican" system of royal control or alliance.

The French Revolution and Napoleonic Wars changed all this. Small states were suppressed, especially in the Rhineland where the episcopal principalities all disappeared, their territories being ultimately absorbed by Prussia and other German states. In general bishops, even where not princes, lost their territorial estates; and feudalism was largely abolished by the Napoleonic *régime*, and was not revived. The episcopate, especially in Germany, thus "escaped" from the control of the monarchs and civil governments; and it therefore came under the centralized authority of the re-established Papacy of Pius VII.

The next step, therefore, for the civil governments was to make agreements, or concordats, with the Papacy, defining the position. Napoleon had made a concordat between France and the Papacy in 1801, and the restored Bourbons recognized this and continued it. The Franco-Papal Concordat was in force until 1904. Bavaria entered into a concordat in 1817, Prussia in 1821.

The new era of war and revolution, and of territorial

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changes, which began in 1914 rendered the concordats out of date. After the Peace Treaties of 1919–20 were made, many diocesan boundaries no longer corresponded with national boundaries. The Habsburg Empire had been partitioned and had completely disappeared. A new system of concordats was necessary if the Roman Catholic Church was to have a definite legal position towards the new civil governments. Accordingly, Papal diplomacy set on foot a series of more or less simultaneous negotiations with Poland, Czechoslovakia, Prussia, Bavaria, and other countries, and a new series of concordats was signed. The concordat between the Holy See and Germany, concluded after the National Socialist Revolution, and dated July 20, 1933, may be taken as a type. Article 1 guarantees confessional liberty and the public exercise of the Catholic religion. Article 2 confirms the concordats already signed with Bavaria (1924), Prussia (1929), and Baden (1932), but adds that henceforth no new concordats may be made by German states without a previous agreement between the Holy See and the Reich. Article 3 provides for the continuance of the nunciature at Berlin and the German Embassy at Rome. Article 4 assures liberty of correspondence between the Holy See and the bishops and clergy and other members of the Catholic Church in Germany. The clergy are exempt from public functions, such as service as jurors, and are dispensed from answering before a court on matters touching their professional secrecy (Articles 6, 9). The existing organization and delimitation of the dioceses is maintained (Article 11). Episcopal sees, chapters, parishes, and religious orders and communities are assured a juridical capacity (Article 13). Catholic ecclesiastics exercising ministry or teaching in Germany must be of German birth, and must have studied theology for three years at a German university or at the Catholic

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University of Rome. The bull of nomination of a prelate can only be delivered after the name has been communicated to the Statthalter of the appropriate state and after ascertainment that no objection of a political nature exists against the candidate (Article 14). Before taking possession of their dioceses, bishops take, between the hands of the Statthalter, or of the Reich president, an oath of fidelity (Article 16). The faculties of Catholic theology in the universities are maintained. The nomination of Catholic professors of religious instruction shall be made after agreement between the bishop and the Government of the country (Articles 19, 22). Religious Catholic instruction shall be given in schools; programmes and textbooks of religious instruction shall be chosen by agreement with the ecclesiastical authorities (Article 21). Religious orders and congregations are authorized to found and to conduct free schools (Article 25). The Reichswehr has power to establish, for Catholic soldiers, a pastoral corps with a military bishop, nominated by the Holy See after agreement with the Government (Article 27). Ecclesiastics are forbidden to be members of political parties or to engage in activities favouring any parties (Article 32). An additional protocol acknowledges the apostolic nuncio as *doyen* of the diplomatic corps at Berlin.<sup>1</sup>

The appropriate condition for the Papal power is obviously that it should be international. In the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, when powerful nation-states were arising or consolidating themselves, there was a risk of the Papacy coming under the control of some national sovereign. This was, however, prevented by the Pope being always an Italian, for then he could not be a national of Spain, France, or

<sup>1</sup> The text of the concordat, which was inscribed in German and Italian, is given in a French translation in *L'Esprit International*, October 1933, pp. 653–62.

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other great state; and if he were himself sovereign of an Italian principality, making up some of the revenue lost through the Reformation, his independence would be further ensured. It is true to say that the Popes "Italianized" themselves in order to be international; and that the Temporal Power was a reasonable support of this neutral position.

In 1870 the Papacy lost the Temporal Power when Rome was occupied by the Italian state. Italy herself was by this time a Great Power. Consequently, the unwritten rule that the Pope should always be an Italian was no longer a guarantee or an essential condition of his internationality; nor could the possession of an insignificant Temporal State in the midst of a powerful Italian kingdom offer any support to his neutrality. The loss of the Temporal Power was therefore a real gain to the Pope, and balanced the real loss which his international position had sustained through the rise of Italy as a Great Power. The rule, if it is a rule, that the Pope should be an Italian, would appear now to be out of date, and not altogether in conformity with modern conditions; on the other hand, the neutral position of the Papacy might be still more seriously compromised if the Pope could be selected from the nationals of the other Great Powers as well as Italy. Considerations of national *prestige* and rivalry, claims that it should be the "turn" of such and such a Great Power to supply an occupant of the Papal Chair, would be sure to arise, as they do with regard to appointments in the Secretariat of the League of Nations. The maintenance of the rule or practice that the Pope shall be chosen from among the Italian cardinals takes the election out of international competition, and, in addition to the character of the man and the office, is perhaps as good a guarantee of neutrality as is to be found.

Papal Diplomacy from the Reformation to 1870 was mainly

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defensive; it was engaged in endeavouring to prevent further secessions from the Church in the time of the Emperor Charles V and Philip II of Spain; or in keeping outside the domination of some great state, as in the time of Louis XIV or Joseph II of Austria or Napoleon. In the nineteenth century, from the Congress of Vienna to the Franco-German War, Papal diplomacy was largely engaged in defending the Temporal Power against the rising tide of Italian nationalism. Antonelli, Papal Secretary of State from 1848 to 1876, the chief diplomatist of Pius IX, was not a priest, and his diplomacy was merely one of makeshifts—of staving off a disaster which he regarded philosophically as inevitable sooner or later. The complete loss of the Temporal State in 1870 was, in fact, a great release. It set free the Papacy to pursue a truly international policy, without being turned aside or absorbed by continual solicitude for its Temporal Power.

When the Italian Government forcibly entered Rome and annexed the Papal State on September 20, 1870, Pius IX naturally made a protest and published it to all the world. Thereafter he, and his three immediate successors, never left the Vatican precincts, which, though on the territory annexed by the Italian state, were in fact treated as being extra-territorial and therefore immune from soldiers or functionaries of the Royal Government. The refusal of the Popes to leave the Vatican is usually regarded simply as a sign of their protest which they continued to make against annexation. It was more, however, than a mere expression of indignation or policy; it was a legal precaution. Just outside the main gate of the Vatican a soldier of the Royal Italian Army was always stationed. If the Pope had gone out of the Vatican, the Italian sentry would have presented arms; and the Pope must either acknowledge that courtesy, and thus “recognize” the legiti-

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macy of the occupation of Rome, or else must incur the risk of being arrested. "Not one of Pius IX's successors was willing to do either, and they preferred remaining inside the Vatican walls till they died."<sup>1</sup>

Pius IX was *intransigeant*; he had excommunicated King Victor Emmanuel II, the "spoiler" of the Temporal State. Diplomatic relations between the two were impossible. Both sovereigns, however, died in the same year, 1878; and with two new sovereigns a new start could be made. The new Pope, Leo XIII (Gioacchino Pecci), was thoroughly statesmanlike, and was a diplomatist of the best type. Born in 1810 of an ancient noble family in the Papal State, he was trained, after leaving the Jesuit School of Viterbo, in the Accademia dei Nobili ecclesiastici through which Papal diplomatists usually graduate. He was ordained priest in 1837, and was made delegate or governor of the Papal Temporal State of Benevento, and later of Perugia. From 1843 to 1846 he was nuncio (or ambassador) at Brussels, with the title of Archbishop of Damietta.

The Papal diplomatic service differs from that of other Powers in that it is not completely specialized. The Papal diplomatists, with rare exceptions (Antonelli was one), are all priests; they have continuously to perform their priestly duties, so that in a sense they are only part-time diplomatists. In this, as in other respects, circumstances make the Papacy conservative; for originally diplomatists were not highly specialized, but were bishops or other professional men who shewed an aptitude for diplomacy and were frequently employed thereon. Archbishop Pecci's diplomatic career was subject to

<sup>1</sup> N. V. Tcharykow, *The Roman Question in Contemporary Review*, March 1930, p. 342. Tcharykow, a distinguished official of the old Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was Minister-Resident at the Vatican in 1897.

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an unusually long interruption; for after being nuncio at Brussels for three years he was made Archbishop of Perugia, and for thirty years was engaged exclusively in the affairs of his diocese. On Antonelli's death in 1876, Archbishop Pecci was brought to Rome to fill the office of *Camerlengo* and Secretary of State. Pius IX died on February 7, 1878, and on February 20th Cardinal Pecci was elected Pope, taking the name of Leo XIII.

The diplomatic situation of the Papacy was extremely troubled at this time. The "Roman Question" was in just the same unsatisfactory condition as in 1870; Pius IX had not moved an inch. The Government of the French Republic, and the majority of the French people, led by the "tribune," Gambetta, were almost violently anti-clerical. The Austrian Government, under the Chancellorship of Count Beust, a Protestant Saxon, had (in 1879) suppressed the concordat of 1855; the Prussian Government, guided by the terrible Bismarck, had brought about the suppression of the privileges and liberties of the Roman Catholic Church in all the states of Germany which were subject to Prussian control or influence. This episode, known as the *Kulturkampf* (or War of Culture), had been in progress since 1871. Even with the Russian Government, usually on excellent terms with the Papacy, there had been no diplomatic relations since 1863, on account of the attitude taken up by Roman Catholic priests in Poland during the rebellion of that year. The British Government and the United States of America had no diplomatic relations with the Vatican. That the greatest religious community in the world should be almost in a state of war, or at any rate of extremely strained relations, with the Governments of most of the Christian Powers of the world was a shocking anomaly.

Leo XIII set himself to remedy this disastrous condition of

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affairs. Fundamentally he was as strong and uncompromising in his views and sentiments as Pius IX. Not merely did he never abandon the claim to territorial sovereignty, but he explicitly, as late as 1895, was putting forward the demand for it.<sup>1</sup> Intransigent, as even a Catholic observer called him,<sup>2</sup> he was, nevertheless, more tolerant in method and far more intellectual, while personally he was as sweet and approachable as his lovable but not equally clever predecessor had been. "In his great task Leo XIII was much aided by his wonderful and unique personal charm."<sup>3</sup> Personal qualities are obviously of the greatest importance in diplomacy. Leo XIII's diplomacy was greatly helped by reason of his attractive disposition, and of his high moral purpose and integrity. It must also be borne in mind that he had much more constitutional power than most monarchs; the Pope is an absolute monarch in law, though naturally subject to influence from his ministers and officials, as well as from the powerful traditions and customs of his own office.

The dignitaries of the Roman Church do not commonly write memoirs, and the Vatican does not publish its diplomatic correspondence. Fortunately, the greater part of the pontificate of Leo XIII is, as a matter of fact, covered by one of those rare books of memoirs; indeed, it is almost unique. The Cardinal Domenique Ferrata had a long experience of Papal diplomacy, having been sent in 1879 by Leo XIII as assistant to the nuncio at Paris, Monseigneur Czacki, who had been Secretary for Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs under Pius IX. Ferrata served in the nunciature for three years. He next became Secretary for Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs at the

<sup>1</sup> Hohenlohe, *Denkwürdigkeiten der Reichskanzlerzeit* (1931), p. 148.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Tcharykow, op. cit., p. 341.

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Vatican; and in 1890 was sent back to Paris, as nuncio, for five years. In September 1914 he was appointed Secretary of State by Pope Benedict XV, but was suddenly taken ill and died a month afterwards. He left the record of his diplomatic missions to Paris in a volume of *Memoirs*, written with great simplicity and charm, and bearing on its face all the marks of frankness and truth.<sup>1</sup>

Ferrata at the outset describes in general terms the task which faced Papal diplomacy as conceived by Leo XIII at the inauguration of his pontificate.

The Papacy had to busy itself in renewing with the Powers relations of confidence and sympathy; opening negotiations after the combat; offering an honourable peace after having proved by facts the sterility of the struggle; breaking down inveterate prejudices; demonstrating by the language of reason and good sense that in face of the ills and disturbances of society, religion is the principal guarantee of order, of prosperity, and of peace.<sup>2</sup>

The diplomatic situation regarding France was particularly bad, and, judged by all the signs, it looked like becoming only worse. Gambetta's "*le cléricalisme, voilà l'ennemi*" was ringing in everybody's ears. The Monarchists, who were very numerous in France, were strong partisans of the Papacy; but Leo XIII held that it would be both impolitic and immoral to work through them; for this would mean a religious war with the Republic, for which the Pope refused to be responsible. Such a challenge would have brought about the denunciation of the Franco-Papal Concordat. The alternative was to accept and to win the confidence of the Republic. It was to inaugurate this policy that Monseigneur Czacki was sent to the Paris nunciature in 1879, with Ferrata to assist him. Many people prophe-

<sup>1</sup> Ferrata, *Mémoires* (Rome, 1922).

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 14.

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sied that Czacki would be the last Papal nuncio in France. On the other hand, if a story recently made public is true, Leo XIII had made up his mind that French Royalism was dead. "I advise French Catholics," he is reported as having said to M. de Blowitz, "to rally sincerely to the Republic. . . . Throughout the centuries the Church has been attached only to one corpse—that which you see there on the cross."<sup>1</sup> Yet he told the Kaiser William II in 1893 that he was trying to influence the French people to take the view that Monarchy was much better for them than the Republic.<sup>2</sup>

The instructions issued to Czacki on going to Paris in 1879 were to combine dignity and firmness with readiness to co-operate with the Government of the Republic—"gently to aid this noble country to issue from the crisis in which it is struggling, instead of turning the crisis, in lightness of heart, into a religious war more bitter than ever." The sensible arguments, the seductive (*séduisant*) language of Czacki surprised the anti-clerical politicians of the Republic, and made an immediate impression. The nuncio refused to be used by the French Monarchists as a *tremplin* (springboard). One day Gambetta visited the nunciature, Rue Bosquet, and passed three hours there in conversation with Czacki. The nuncio's attitude was seriously criticised in Catholic quarters, but he persisted.

In 1880 an incident occurred which showed the immense change for the better which was taking place in Franco-Papal relations. In that year the Jesuit houses in France were closed, and all other Congregations subjected to licence. A further project of law was introduced into the Chamber to disperse such religious Congregations as were not specifically authorized. M. de Freycinet, Minister of Foreign Affairs, was a Protestant.

<sup>1</sup> Paléologue, *Un Grand Tournant de la Politique Mondiale*, p. 46.

<sup>2</sup> Hohenlohe, *Denkwürdigkeiten der Reichskanzlerzeit*, p. 609.

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He approached Czacki (it is possible, of course, that someone else, perhaps Cardinal Lavigérie, took the first step) and suggested that the Superiors of the threatened Congregations should sign a declaration; this declaration was to be to the effect that they harboured no hostile sentiments to the Republic and to the authority of the state. The document was to be kept secret until the law came up for discussion in the Chamber, when M. de Freycinet would mount the tribune, disclose the agreement, and use all his authority to persuade the deputies to leave the Congregations in peace. Czacki accepted the proposal and carried through the delicate negotiations with the Vatican, the Superiors of the Congregations, and the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Unfortunately, the declaration was divulged by the calculated indiscretion of an interested party in the Monarchist journal, *La Guyenne*. Radicals and Monarchists raised a storm of protest, and the negotiation had to be dropped, with considerable odium brought upon the Papal nuncio, and the resignation of Freycinet from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Some good actually came of the affair, as, in the public discussion which arose over it, the extremists felt compelled to give way so far as to agree to the exemption of Congregations of women from the law of dispersion.<sup>1</sup>

The policy of tactful co-operation with the Republic was carried a step further, at a time of tension, by an act of Cardinal Lavigérie (Archbishop of Algiers from 1868 to his death in 1892), suggested (though not in the form in which it occurred) to that prelate, when on a visit to Rome, by Leo XIII himself. On returning to Algiers, the Cardinal entertained the officers of the French naval squadron and took the occasion in a speech, delivered with much warmth and force, to proclaim the

<sup>1</sup> Ferrata, op. cit., pp. 25–28; cf. Bourgeois, *Modern France* (1919), II, pp. 284–5.

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adhesion of the French clergy to the Republic (November 12, 1890). The Cardinal's declaration and the manner of it went far beyond what was customary in Vatican diplomatic tradition and etiquette, and it aroused considerable disapproval in Roman Catholic and Monarchist circles. The Press, however, was brought into action by the authorities to support diplomacy; the *Osservatore Romano*, the Vatican semi-official journal, and the Jesuit *Civiltà Cattolica* at Rome, and the *Moniteur* at Paris received the order to pronounce in favour of the cardinal.<sup>1</sup>

Monseigneur Ferrata's five years at Paris from 1890 to 1895 produced the best effects on the diplomatic situation, and when he left his nunciature (which was then in the Rue de Varenne) he received a warm encomium from the *Journal des Débats*. "The best, the sole manner of judging a diplomatist when his mission comes to an end," wrote the *Débats*, "is to ask if he leaves in a better or worse state the relations which existed at the beginning of his mission between his Government and the Government to which he is accredited." The writer added that there was no doubt about the beneficent result of Monseigneur Ferrata's mission.

In about ten years' time after Ferrata's mission, most of the good work was destroyed under Pope Pius X. The President of the French Republic, M. Loubet, had gone on a visit to the King of Italy from April 24 to 29, 1904. On the evening of the day on which the President left Rome, the Cardinal Secretary of State, Monseigneur Merry del Val, delivered to the French ambassador at the Vatican a note of vigorous protest against the visit, called in the note a "grave offence to the Sovereign Pontiff." The French Minister for Foreign Affairs, Delcassé was an energetic and somewhat irascible and bitter man. He replied briefly and stiffly that "he had no choice

<sup>1</sup> Ferrata, op. cit., pp. 54-7.

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but to reject in the name of his Government the considerations developed in the note of the Cardinal Secretary of State." The original note of protest of the Vatican was shortly afterwards, May 17th, published by Jaurès in *L'Humanité*, not on information from the French Government, but from the Vatican itself. Delcassé was apparently taken aback by this *démarche*. He did not wish to lose the advantage for France of the concordat and of regular relations with the Vatican; but he had gone too far to withdraw, for the Cabinet, particularly the Minister of the Interior, Combes, was pronouncedly anti-clerical. On May 20, 1904, the French ambassador to the Vatican was withdrawn.<sup>1</sup> There followed upon this the complete separation of Church and state in France.

The creation of good relations with the French Republic was the first great diplomatic effort made by Leo XIII. Having inaugurated this policy in 1878, he turned his attention to the German question. The Vatican at that time was in a much stronger position, in relation to Germany, than it was in relation to France. The long struggle of the Prussian Government (and other Protestant German Governments) against the Papacy, called the *Kulturkampf*, was failing; the seven years' resistance of the clergy made the system of state control largely ineffective. Bismarck could not afford permanently to alienate Catholic voting-strength. In these circumstances it was statesmanship for the Vatican, being in the stronger position, to make a friendly advance, and for Bismarck with friendly grace to invite it and accept it. The approved method of semi-official "spa-diplomacy" was employed. As in all such struggles, when both sides are anxious to reach settlement and neither is completely uncompromising, it is difficult to say

<sup>1</sup> Paléologue, *Un Grand Tournant de la Politique Mondiale*, pp. 68-9  
89-91.

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who precisely took the first step. Bismarck had withdrawn the Prussian Minister at the Vatican in 1871. He now renewed the representation. In August 1881 Kurd von Schlözer, a Protestant (as were most of the Prussian representatives at the Vatican), took up his post at the Palazzo Caffarelli and entered into conversations with the Vatican. Bismarck had already, three years earlier, conferred with Cardinal Masella (nuncio to Bavaria) at Kissingen, July 29th to August 16th (1878).<sup>1</sup> The "anti-clerical" laws were amended, in a direction favourable to the Papal views, in the Prussian Diet (1880-81). After Herr von Schlözer's arrival in Rome, progress became a little better. Nevertheless, five years passed before complete agreement was reached. In 1885 the German Government, having occupied the Caroline Islands, had a dispute with Spain which put forward a claim to the islands. Bismarck tactfully proposed that the Pope should mediate. Spain, as a great Catholic state, could hardly decline. Leo XIII accepted the offer and after studying the situation reported that the Carolines belonged to Spain. The German Government accepted the report, and a protocol was drawn up, and was signed at Rome by Kurd von Schlözer for Germany, and the Marques de Molins for Spain, on December 17, 1885. On the evening of the conclusion of the Protocol, the Cardinal Secretary of State, Jacobini, entertained the whole diplomatic corps accredited to the Vatican, and a number of bishops who were friendly to Germany. The Austrian ambassador, *doyen* of the diplomatic corps, gave the toast of the health of the Pope.<sup>2</sup>

As a sovereign the Pope's position was and is anomalous, in so far as the people who are in obedience to him are the subjects of other sovereign states. The Temporal state (or

<sup>1</sup> Hans Blum, *Das Deutsche Reich zur Zeit Bismarcks* (1893), pp. 381-2.

<sup>2</sup> K. von Schlözer, *Letzte Römische Briefe*, II, pp. 69-70.

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states of the Church) had and has a quite insignificant fraction of the vast multitudes who own allegiance to him. The Pope's spiritual subjects are the professing Roman Catholics in every state in the world. Moreover, he is recognized by all professing Roman Catholics as being infallible when he speaks *ex cathedra*, officially, on matters of faith and morals. When, in 1869, the report went about Europe that the Pope was going to assume this power, the Governments of states which contained numerous Roman Catholic citizens were seriously alarmed. Prince Hohenlohe, Prime Minister of Bavaria, a Roman Catholic and brother of a cardinal, endeavoured by means of a circular dispatch, dated April 9, 1869, to induce the European Governments to take some action to stop the declaration of infallibility.<sup>1</sup> His initiative, however, met with no favourable response. The decree of infallibility was voted in the General Council of the Church (the "Vatican Council") on July 18, 1870. The power of the Pope to make pronouncements on matters of faith and morals, binding upon all Roman Catholics, might lead to conflict with the domestic laws of sovereign states. Such extreme issues, however, have usually been avoided; devout Roman Catholics have found it possible, in practice, to reconcile their duties to their state and their duties to the Pope. Papal diplomacy is, on the one hand, limited by the fact that practically all Roman Catholics are subjects of foreign Governments; on the other hand, it is strengthened by the fact that it always commands the sympathy and a certain degree of obedience in a vast public, spread through every civilized community in the world.

Vatican diplomacy is thus in a peculiarly delicate condition. Even in the time of the Temporal Power, Lamartini commented on the fact that the diplomatic structure of the Papacy had

<sup>1</sup> *The Memoirs of Prince Hohenlohe* (1906), II, pp. 326 ff.

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only a moral base to rest on. It has no material forces at its command, no large territory, no imposing naval or military arms, no commercial interests, no great revenues. The Pope speaks with the voice of an independent ruler, but his subjects are the subjects of other states. His interests are not concentrated in any particular regions, but are in every part of the world, and are being affected by the legislation, administration, and judicial processes of every sovereign state. The office of the Cardinal Secretary of State has to exercise incessant watchfulness on the countless activities of every state, and when it feels bound to take diplomatic action, has to proceed with the utmost caution. It is not surprising, therefore, that Vatican diplomacy, which is very old, is also very conservative. It adheres to the old secret methods; and this is the reason why so little is known about it. The Treaties of the Lateran, signed on February 11, 1929, were preceded by a long and complicated series of conferences between Signor Mussolini and Cardinal Gasparri, some two hundred and sixty in all,<sup>1</sup> about which the public knew and still know nothing. President Loubet is reported to have said that the Vatican excels in making ambiguous conventions,<sup>2</sup> but this criticism is scarcely justified. Although it is the business of diplomacy to negotiate written documents, and these should be nothing if not clear, few treaties, by whatever Power they are concluded, are free from ambiguity.

<sup>1</sup> Tcharykow, op. cit., p. 344.

<sup>2</sup> Paléologue, *Un Grand Tournant de la Politique Mondiale* (1934), p. 34.

## CHAPTER XIII

### SOVIET DIPLOMACY

DIPLOMACY is one of the things that change least in the world, for it meets the great secular need of mankind, the need of peoples to make arrangements with each other, so that they can go about their several ways in peace. If, as the Austrian thinker, Kelsen, maintains,<sup>1</sup> international law is superior to municipal law, the persistence of diplomacy is just the natural result of this superiority, as it is through diplomacy that international law, the law between nations and the Law of Nations, functions. Besides, if diplomacy, in addition to being a channel and method of international law is also (as Dummreicher wrote) just common sense applied to the great affairs of the world, its persistence is adequately explained.

It is therefore not surprising that revolutionary Governments, however drastically they break up the old *régime* of their country, either carry on the inherited diplomatic system or else return to it sooner or later. The most striking instance of this truth is the French Revolutionary Governments of 1792–5 which maintained a nucleus of the foreign ministry and diplomatic corps of the *ancien régime*, and carried on the traditional policies of Richelieu, Louis XIV, Choiseul, and Vergennes.<sup>2</sup>

The French Revolution was, however, comparatively speaking, conservative. Although it developed a hatred of

<sup>1</sup> See Kelsen, *Das Problem der Souveränität und die Theorie der Völkerrechts* (1920), and Lauterpacht, *Kelsen's Pure Science of Law in Modern Theories of Law* (1933), pp. 125–9.

<sup>2</sup> See Masson, *Le Département des Affaires étrangères pendant la Révolution* (1877).

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the aristocracy, who had supplied the chief *personnel* of the old diplomacy, it fell entirely under the control of the bourgeoisie. The bourgeois, naturally conservative, traditional, cautious, was not likely to jettison all the inheritance of the past. He was determined to do away with aristocratic privilege and to open a career to talent; but after this had been accomplished he meant to guide the state, consistently, with ideas of progress, along the good old ways. There had always been a substratum of bourgeois officials in the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and this substratum never disappeared throughout the Revolution; moreover, the necessities of the maintenance of the administration of foreign policy in dangerous times made the retention of experienced officials convenient and almost unavoidable.

The Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 was a very different sort of affair from the French. It was anti-aristocratic, anti-bourgeois. Judged by the standards of Western civilization, it was anti-social; for Western civilization was based on classical culture, the Christian religion, the existence of private property, private enterprise, individual freedom. The Bolshevik ideal implied the rejection of classical culture, a denial of the claims of the Christian religion, the destruction of private property, the prohibition of private enterprise, and the abolition of individual freedom; in brief, it was the establishing of a proletarian, communist, egalitarian state which could only be perfectly achieved through a complete breach with the traditions, the habits, the rules of the past. As the existing diplomacy was essentially a product of the past, incorporating these traditions, habits, rules, and wholly conducted by aristocrats and bourgeois, the Bolsheviks would naturally make the break here, if anywhere, complete.

Accordingly, the Soviet leaders, in their early public

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announcements, did in fact proclaim certain principles which were meant to be a fresh start in diplomatic methods and aims. Seizing authority in Russia during the most desperate period of the World War, they proclaimed the principles of peace without annexations and without indemnities; the right of peoples to self-determination even if this involved secession and the formation of independent states; and open diplomacy. These principles, though not inconsistent with the existing practice or aims of diplomacy, were certainly not among its fundamentals.<sup>1</sup> Acting on their proclaimed principles, the Soviets acquiesced in the self-determination and secession of the Finns, Estonians, Latvians, Lithuanians, and Poles. They also offered peace without compensation on either side to the Central Powers, and insisted during the peace negotiations at Brest-Litovsk on publishing their record and impressions of the conference by wireless messages to all the world.

Naturally, the Soviets made drastic changes in the *personnel* of the public offices. The old Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Diplomatic Service were famous institutions, with great achievements to their credit, and with a definite character of their own. They were not exclusively staffed by the aristocracy, for the Tsar was an absolute monarch, and could choose his high servants wherever he pleased. In effect, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Diplomatic Service were staffed by men who came out of the bureaucratic class, almost as hereditary as the *noblesse de robe* of the *ancien régime* in France. They were sons or nephews of men, some titled, some merely bourgeois and professional, who themselves

<sup>1</sup> The Soviet declaration of principles was published in English translation in the *New York Nation* of December 28, 1918, and in *International Conciliation*, March 1919, No. 136.

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had served in public offices or whose families had served. The new entrants, after being nominated, had to serve probationary terms and take examinations, in order that they should be definitely established in the public service. There was no hard-and-fast distinction between the *personnel* of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Diplomatic Service. Most of the diplomatists served their early years in the Ministry, and interchanges between the two services were frequent. In the nineteenth century Russian diplomacy had a distinguished record; Nesselrode in the first half of the century; Gortchakoff and Brunnow in the 'fifties, 'sixties, and 'seventies; de Giers in the 'eighties and early 'nineties; Isvolski, a lesser figure, Tcharykow, unassuming but important, continued the great tradition in the early twentieth century. All these men had a strongly developed "European" sense, and were great at international conferences and diplomatic visits. They spent their vacations at Baden-Baden, or on the Tegern See or Lake Lucerne, at Nice or Biarritz. They toured the capitals of Europe incessantly on diplomatic journeys. Speaking several languages perfectly, men of the world, fond of society, amateurs of good wine and good food, conversational, ironic, intellectually, if superficially, cultured, they were welcome wherever they went. In the general decadence of Russian high life in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the men of the Foreign Ministry and Diplomatic Service stand out as a surviving élite, not absolutely immune from the short-comings of Russian society, but amid prevailing worldliness, dissoluteness, extravagance, and selfishness retaining a certain degree of moderation, and above all a certain sense of the solidarity of Europe which marked the school of Nesselrode and Brunnow.

The Bolshevik Revolution of October 7, 1917, aimed at

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being a complete revolution—political, social, economic. Its objects, if they were to be completely achieved, necessitated the extermination of the aristocracy and also of the bourgeoisie who filled all the public offices. A complete change of personnel, however, was impossible. Some sort of administration had to continue. The offices were kept open, and a *cadre* of Tsarist officials (naturally only those who accepted the Bolshevik régime) was retained. This element of continuity with the *ancien régime* continued to function until 1925, when it was for the most part replaced by authentic members of the Communist Party.

The direction of the Soviet Foreign Office is in the hands of a People's Commissary for Foreign Affairs, assisted by a council (or college) of three nominated by the general Council of People's Commissaries. This collegiate organization is designed to ensure proletarian control of the conduct of foreign affairs, and to limit the power of the permanent officials as well as of the People's Commissary himself. This system has been successful in impressing a continuously "proletarian" and somewhat self-assertive mark upon Russian foreign policy, without wholly removing from it its old "European" character.

After seizing control of Russian government, the Soviet authorities dismissed all the existing Russian diplomatists accredited to foreign states. They abolished the rank of ambassador and all other grades in their diplomatic representation, and recognized one type of agent only, *Polpred*, or "representative plenipotentiary."<sup>1</sup> At the same time, the Soviet authorities refused to recognize any distinction in diplomatic rank among the foreign diplomatists accredited to Russia. Down to 1922 there were only provisional or

<sup>1</sup> Genêt, *Traité de Diplomatie*, I, p. 260.

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abnormal diplomatic relations between the Soviet Government and foreign Powers, Germany, by the Treaty of Rapallo, April 16, 1922, was the first to establish regular diplomatic relations. Partly through written agreements, partly through tacit recognition of the rules and customs of International Law, the position of foreign diplomatists in Moscow and of Soviet diplomatists in foreign capitals has become practically approximate to the normal system as it existed before the Revolution. In effect, the Soviet diplomatic representative in the capital of a Great Power is accorded the rank and precedence of an ambassador. The Soviet representative to the Republic of China was specially commissioned by his Government as ambassador, and thus ranked for a time as *doyen* of the diplomatic corps, as the other Powers maintained representatives with only the rank of minister.

✓ The first big item of diplomatic business which the Soviet Government had to transact was the conclusion of peace with the Central Powers. In this negotiation the Soviet Government was at a tremendous disadvantage. Its armies were defeated and for the time being completely demoralized. Its Baltic provinces were occupied by German armies. It had nothing in its favour except the appeal to world public opinion, and the eagerness of the Central Powers, particularly of Austria, for peace. Considering the helplessness of the Bolsheviks, and the comparative simplicity of the peace treaty which had to be made, the negotiations were drawn out for a surprisingly long time—from December 20, 1917, to March 3, 1918. The delegates of Russia, Austria, and Germany met to discuss terms at Brest-Litovsk. At the end of each session of the conference a very full report of the proceedings was issued by wireless to the whole world. A good deal of political propaganda was introduced into the conference and

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into the reports, but no particular harm seems to have ensued from this essay in open diplomacy. In the end the Bolshevik Government only came round to the German point of view after a temporary renewal of hostilities by the German army which proceeded (without having to strike a blow) to occupy four great Russian fortresses, Minsk, Dvinsk, Reval, and Pskov. After this negotiations were resumed and proceeded more rapidly. The Treaty of Brest-Litovsk was signed on March 3, 1918, but was later annulled by the Conference of Paris and the Peace Treaty of Versailles.

The first Great Power to establish regular diplomatic relations with Soviet Russia was Germany. At the Conference of Genoa, which assembled on April 10, 1922, Germany was represented by the Chancellor, Dr. Wirth, and by the Foreign Minister, Dr. Rathenau, who was the originator and firm upholder of the "policy of fulfilment." The Conference was concerned with the problem of the economic rehabilitation of Europe, and particularly with the question of German Reparations, which seemed to be on the point of producing a default. Most of the Powers which had fought the War were represented, including Russia, and also certain neutrals. Mr. Lloyd George, the chief British delegate, was anxious to bring Russia back into the European system, and to enable her to resume normal international trading. He was also desirous that Russia should find some means of paying her pre-War debts. Another object of his was to effect some such settlement of the Reparation question as would enable Germany to continue payments, and so prevent M. Poincaré, who was then French Premier, from occupying the Ruhr. His plan seems to have involved the recognition of an obligation on the part of Germany to pay Reparations to Russia as well as to the other "Entente Powers"; and thus

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Russia would have means to pay some of her pre-War debt. Neither the German nor Russian delegations at Genoa regarded this plan with much favour. They seemed to think, also, that the Conference was not making progress towards an economic settlement, and they suspected that M. Poincaré, who remained in Paris and only had a deputy at the Conference, did not want one. So Dr. Rathenau and M. Tchitcherin met together by themselves, at Rapallo, about eighteen miles from Genoa, and signed a Russo-German Commercial Treaty, on April 16th. This action was hotly resented by the other Powers assembled at the Conference, and was stigmatized by them as an act of "ill faith." Although a valiant defence of the Rathenau-Tchitcherin negotiation has been made,<sup>1</sup> it is very difficult to reconcile private bilateral negotiation at a conference with complete loyalty to the rest of the represented Powers.

The Italian, British, and French Governments recognized the Soviet Government *de jure* in 1924. The only Great Power which absolutely refused recognition was the United States. In 1934, however, it, too, entered into official relations with the Soviets.

The approaches of the British Government to the Russian Government have a long history of persistence and of failure. The record is extremely disappointing, for there is no doubt that successive British administrations have made great efforts, though not always with enthusiasm, to establish regular and satisfactory arrangements. The crying need of the world was for the resumption of normal trade relations, destroyed or dislocated by the War. Great Britain, a country depending on a vast import and export trade, suffered particularly through the erection of international tariff barriers, and through the

<sup>1</sup> Kessler, *Rathenau* (trans., 1929), pp. 329-57; see also *supra*, p. 164.

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withdrawal of Russia from the commercial system of the world. On March 16, 1921, a Trade Agreement was concluded between Great Britain and the Soviet Government negotiated by Sir Robert Horne and by Leonid Krassin. It provided for trade between the United Kingdom and Russia on the basis of reciprocity of rights, the British Government according the Soviet Government all such rights as other nations enjoyed in the United Kingdom, and the Soviet similarly according to the United Kingdom all such rights in Russia as were enjoyed by other nations. As the Soviet Government had a monopoly of all Russian foreign trade, and as business between the United Kingdom and Russia could only be done through the Commissariat for Foreign Trade, the terms of the Agreement were not easy to negotiate. It was, further, a remarkable Agreement, as it was concluded between two states which did not accord diplomatic recognition to each other. The preliminary clause contained a "sanction" or condition, on which the continuance of the treaty depended: ✓

✓ The present Agreement is subject to the fulfilment of the following conditions, namely:

That each party refrains from hostile action or undertakings against each other and from conducting outside of its own borders any official propaganda direct or indirect to encourage any of the peoples of Asia in any form of hostile action against British interests or the British Empire, especially in British India and in the Independent State of Afghanistan. The British Government gives a similar particular undertaking to the Russian Soviet Government in respect of the countries which formed part of the former Russian Empire and which have now become independent.

This celebrated "non-propaganda" clause was a new

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departure in diplomacy, for hitherto Governments had always assumed that their domestic situation did not concern each other, and that neither party would ever dream of interfering with the other's internal affairs. Krassin, however, who negotiated the Trade Agreement on the Russian side, was under no illusions about the exceptional nature of the diplomatic conditions and about the necessity for special care. The advantage of the Agreement, he reported to his Government at Moscow, "depends primarily on ourselves, our prudence, our tact, our self-control."<sup>1</sup>

Krassin was probably a rather unusual type of Soviet diplomatist. He was an engineer, a Marxian socialist, but without any "ideologies." He was moderate, sensible, and objective in his point of view. He did not rate the revolutionary Russians very highly. "What I have seen around me," he wrote from Petrograd during the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, "has deepened my conviction that the Russian people has a long way to go yet before it can call itself civilized." His death in 1926 was said to break the last thread between Soviet Russia and Western Europe.

The Trade Agreement functioned, not indeed with brilliant success, but with at any rate moderate commercial results. In 1923, however, some rather serious friction took place. The British Government complained that the clause in the Trade Agreement, in which the Soviet Government promised to refrain from anti-British propaganda, was not being observed. The difficulties between the two Governments came to a head when the British Government made an appeal to the Soviet in favour of Monseigneur Butkevitch, Vicar-General of the Roman Catholic Church in Russia, condemned to death. The Soviet reply, signed by M. Weinstein of the

<sup>1</sup> Lubov Krassin, *Leonid Krassin*, p. 134.

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Commissariat of Foreign Affairs, described the British Government's appeal as "an unfriendly act, and a renewal of the intervention which has been successfully repulsed by the Russian people." He added that he felt it necessary to mention a message received from the Irish Republic about the British Government's intervention on behalf of Mgr. Butkevitch. The Irish Republic, according to M. Weinstein, drew attention to "the hypocritical intervention of the British Government which is responsible for the assassination in cold blood of political prisoners in Ireland, where fourteen thousand men, women, and young girls are treated in a barbarous and inhuman fashion in conformity with the will of Great Britain."<sup>1</sup> The British Government refused to accept this note, which was therefore sent back to the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs by the British *chargé d'affaires*. M. Weinstein, apparently incorrigible, wrote another note in scarcely diplomatic language. The British Government then gave notice that the Trade Agreement would be determined. Thereupon someone in the Commissariat, probably one of the Commissars (Tchitcherin, Litvinov, Karakhan), woke up to the ridiculousness of the Weinstein style of diplomacy. His notes were withdrawn and no more is heard of him. Negotiations were resumed in a new series of communications, which were very ably written, in conciliatory language, from the Russian side, as they also were from the British. Lord Curzon, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, conducted the correspondence for Great Britain.

In 1924 the Conservative Government of Mr. Baldwin failed to win an absolute majority at the General Election. A Labour Government was formed with Mr. Ramsay MacDonald as Prime Minister and Secretary of State for

<sup>1</sup> Parl. Papers Cmd. 1869 of 1923, and 1864 of 1923.

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Foreign Affairs. On February 1, 1924, he accorded to the Soviet Government the coveted *de jure* recognition; in so doing he perhaps deprived himself of a means of legitimate bargaining in the subsequent negotiations which he was anxious to carry through successfully. M. Rakhovsky came to London as *chargé d'affaires*, and notes were exchanged defining the programme of an Anglo-Soviet Conference which was opened at London in April.

The Anglo-Soviet Conference of London lasted from April 14th to August 16, 1924. It has been described as a tragico-comedy and a series of crises.<sup>1</sup> There can be no doubt that on the British side the Labour Government, from inclination and from interest, was desirous, obstinately desirous, for a settlement. Politically, it would have been a great success for them to end a diplomatic rupture which had endured between the two great states for nearly seven years. Economically, the settlement of the Anglo-Soviet debt claims and other outstanding financial and commercial questions would have been a considerable help to British industry and commerce. From the Russian point of view the advantages of settlement were not of corresponding value. Politically, the Soviet Government might suffer in the eyes of its Communist supporters at home and abroad by recognizing the claims of a "capitalist" Power for the restoration of pre-War treaties and of the old Law of Nations. Economically, the Soviet Government might feel that a settlement which obliged it to pay the debts or part of the debts of pre-Soviet Russia and of Russian industries to British nationals (amounting to many hundreds of millions of pounds sterling) was no gain to itself. In any negotiation, when one party can afford (or thinks that it can afford) to do without a settlement, and the other

<sup>1</sup> Jacques Bardoux in *L'Esprit International*, January 1, 1928, p. 24.

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for obvious reasons is eager to settle, the first party is at an enormous advantage. The Soviet diplomats, in long-drawn-out and patiently conducted negotiations, cleverly induced the British diplomats to agree upon a draft convention of ambiguous terms which might result in a complete annulment of all Soviet financial liability. Such a draft agreement was, of course, practically certain never to be ratified by the British Parliament, and the Soviet authorities must surely have known this. It therefore seems impossible to escape the conclusion that the Soviet Government was not perfectly sincere in engaging in the London negotiation; and diplomacy without sincerity always fails.

The Conference resulted in the signature of two treaties, one political and one financial, dated August 8, 1924. Both treaties, in regard to their form, phraseology, and content, contained grave defects, judged by the received standards of diplomacy. The financial agreement, which included an acknowledgment of a Soviet right to make counter-claims against Great Britain, contained the means for infinite future disputing; for the Soviet Government made no secret of their intention to claim against Great Britain a great part of the cost of the Russian Civil War of 1919–20, which they contended, not without reason, to have been largely maintained by Allied assistance. Nevertheless, the Labour Government could not have avoided pressing for ratification in Parliament; and Mr. MacDonald was probably much relieved when a General Election sent back to office a Conservative Government which had not been committed in the negotiations and which was certain to accept with alacrity the opportunity of refusing ratification of the treaties.

Mr. Lloyd George, Lord Curzon, and Mr. MacDonald had thus each, in their different ways, endeavoured to bring about

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normal diplomatic relations with the Soviets, and had failed. On the whole, Lord Curzon, who was the least compromising of the three, was the most successful. In the Conservative Government which came into office in November 1925, Sir Austen Chamberlain was Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. Relations with the Soviets continued according to the Trade Agreement of Mr. Lloyd George, and the official recognition of Mr. MacDonald. It was believed, however, on the British side, that the undertaking of the Soviets not to engage in propaganda against the institutions of the British Empire was not being observed. In 1927 a police search was made in the offices of the Soviet Trade Delegation in London, and evidence of propaganda was found there. On March 27th Sir Austen Chamberlain notified the rupture of diplomatic relations, without affecting, however, the conditions of commercial intercourse; the Trade Agreement remained in force for the next five years. This singular state of affairs continued until the Labour Party returned to office in 1929. Diplomatic relations were resumed, and prolonged conversations took place at the Foreign Office between Mr. Arthur Henderson, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and M. Grégoire Sokolnikoff, Soviet ambassador (March–April 1930 and October–May 1931). The subject of the conversations was the negotiation of a trade agreement and the question of Russian debts to Great Britain and to British citizens. A temporary trade agreement was signed on April 16, 1931. The Soviet Government had always refused to recognize Tsarist debts or concessions. The British Government held that the debts and concessions were valid, and must be met by the debtor after agreement or arrangement with the creditors. Obviously until this question should be settled and put out of the way, the diplomatic relations of the two

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countries could not be quite normal. The Henderson-Sokolnikoff conversations on debts, and the deliberations of appropriate committees, which went on for six months, were absolutely without result. Not until nearly three more years had passed was a regular Trade Agreement made, dated February 16, 1934. The Trade Representatives of the Soviet Government are accorded diplomatic privileges; and diplomatic immunities apply to the offices of the Soviet Trade Delegation in London. But the Debt Question remained unsettled.

Why did the British Government maintain with such persistence and in spite of so many rebuffs and failures the effort to establish normal relations with the Soviets? And why did agreement prove for so long to be impossible? The British persistence is explained by a natural inclination on the part of all regular Governments to see normal conditions around it; by the decline of British trade, as the result, chiefly, of the World War, and partly of the Russian Revolution; and by the British political interest in the Near East and in Central Asia. On all these counts good relations with the Soviets were desirable. The failures to obtain agreement were probably due to the fact that Soviet diplomatists labour under particular disadvantages; they have less of the professional element than other diplomatic services, and they are more subject to influence from a political party.

The professional element has largely disappeared from the Soviet diplomatic service since 1925; the old officials have gone; there is no regular system of recruiting or training. The absence of career-diplomatists makes for a somewhat uncompromising diplomacy. Career-diplomatists are merely professional men, and they always will make a settlement

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if their Governments will only permit them to do so.<sup>1</sup> Soviet diplomatists have no professional bias in favour of settlement as such; they are politicians and communists, and therefore have strong convictions and interests and can scarcely be expected to work for compromise with bourgeois Governments.

' The influence of the Communist Party in Russia, and of its organ the Third International, is hampering Soviet diplomacy. Officially, the source of authority for Soviet diplomacy is the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs, and ultimately the whole Council of People's Commissaries—that is, the Soviet Government; this, however, in turn, is conditioned in its action by the Communist Party of Russia, and the Third International of Workers, established by the Communist Party at Moscow in 1919. A report on an investigation made in the United States Department of State says:

The programme of the Russian Communist Party is one of world revolution, and the Communist International is avowedly the directing and co-ordinating centre of an international revolutionary movement to establish the "World Soviet Republic." It is impossible to differentiate as to world policy between the Russian Communist Party, the Third or Communist International, and the official Soviet administration, because of the systems of "interlocking directorates" common to all three.<sup>2</sup>

The same report, putting the matter another way, states: "The Communist Party of Russia, the Russian Soviets, and

<sup>1</sup> See Mowat, *Plaidoyer en faveur d'un meilleur emploi des diplomates de carrière* in *L'Esprit International*, October 1932.

<sup>2</sup> Report of Department of State, U.S.A., March 20, 1920, printed *International Conciliation*, January and February, 1921. The quotation is from the February number, p. 66.

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the Third International are so closely interrelated as to constitute actually, if not technically, one working organization." This system does not appear to have altered in subsequent years. Therefore, in dealing with individual states, in negotiation with "bourgeois" statesmen supported by career-diplomatists, the Soviet diplomats are subject to special limitations.

On the other hand, when the Soviets have an interest to pursue which is for the general advantage of all existing states, they display an attractive boldness and idealism. Actuated by strong personal conviction or by party zeal and fidelity, they are less at the mercy of the expert than is the Western diplomatist, be he lay or professional. In the various negotiations which took place between 1927 and 1934 for reduction of armaments, Soviet proposals were always of a far-reaching nature, beginning, indeed (1927), with a proposal for complete disarmament within four years. This proposal, though not taken seriously by the Western diplomats, at any rate defined the Soviet's position on the subject of disarmament, and was a guarantee of their approval of any subsequent proposals from other Governments for genuine reduction. It is probably not an exaggeration to say that Western diplomacy, in disarmament conferences, was unduly impressed or limited by arguments and objections of experts, naval and military advisers, who spoke with great authority and almost with unanimity on their own subject. The naval and military experts, each considering the question of his own country's safety, and by profession inclined to distrust the rest, was bound to make progress in disarmament slow. The Soviet negotiators at Geneva, having already defined their very advanced position in 1927, and being always inclined to display a superiority over the West in idealism,

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were not prepared to be impressed by technical objections from experts, and preferred bold steps to the desired end. Their colleagues at Geneva, however, the diplomatists of the Western Powers, were not always convinced of Soviet sincerity.

This lack of trust between the diplomatists of "bourgeois" states and those of the Soviets has been a capital hindrance to negotiations in which Russia is concerned. Diplomacy requires that both parties to a conference shall be biassed in favour of a settlement; that each believes the other to have a sincere desire to that end; and that each trusts the other to be sure loyally to observe any settlement and honestly to try and make it "work."

Cardinal Richelieu, the great French statesman of the seventeenth century, said: "Continual negotiation is wholly necessary for the well-being of states (*Négocier continuellement est tout à fait nécessaire au bien des états*). M. Litvinov, People's Commissary for Foreign Affairs, seems to have been thoroughly convinced of this axiom. In 1933-4 he was incessantly active and became a familiar figure to the statesmen of Europe. No Foreign Minister spent as much time abroad during 1933 as did Maxim Litvinov. But none registered as many important successes."<sup>1</sup> He visited the United States and negotiated the establishing of formal diplomatic relations. The entrance of the National Socialist Government into office and power in Germany, and its somewhat cool attitude towards "Europe," gave M. Litvinov the opportunity of bringing his Government into close, and indeed cordial, relations with a large number of states. His "diplomatic year" included non-aggression agreements with Yugoslavia

<sup>1</sup> Louis Fischer, *Litvinov's Diplomatic Year* in *The Fortnightly Review*, February 1934, p. 129.

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and Rumania, these agreements containing a model and thoroughly comprehensive definition of "aggressor";<sup>1</sup> commercial treaties with Great Britain and the United States; and a project for an Eastern Locarno which, patronized by France, Italy, and Great Britain, made an end of the isolation of the Soviet and brought it fully into the comity of nations.

<sup>1</sup> *Convention for the Definition of Non-Aggression*, July 3, 1933, between the U.S.S.R., Afghanistan, Estonia, Latvia, Persia, Poland, Rumania, Turkey.

Article 2. . . . The aggressor in an international conflict . . . will be considered the state which will be the first to commit any of the following acts:

1. Declaration of war against another state;
2. Invasion by armed forces, even without a declaration of war, of the territory of another state;
3. An attack by armed land, naval, or air forces, even without a declaration of war, upon the territory, naval vessels, or aircraft of another state;
4. Naval blockade of the coasts or ports of another state;
5. Aid to armed bands formed on the territory of a state and invading the territory of another state, or refusal, despite demands on the part of the state subjected to attack, to take all possible measures on its own territory to deprive the said bands of any aid and protection.

Article 3. No considerations of a political, military, economic, or any other nature can serve as an excuse or justification of aggression as specified under Article 2.

## CHAPTER XIV

### SPA DIPLOMACY

READERS of nineteenth-century history are familiar with the names of Continental spas which recur again and again in diplomatic annals. Teplitz, Spa, Plombières, Vichy, Wiesbaden, Gastein, Aix-la-Chapelle, Baden, Carlsbad, Ems, Marienbad, are as famous for their diplomatic history as for their medicinal properties. The practice of transacting diplomacy at pleasant watering-places has not altogether died out, for it has certain conveniences that give it permanent value.

At first sight there might appear to be an element of inconvenience. Spas are crowded places, at any rate in the season. The great "world" meets there; the public eye is upon them. The high diplomatists are marked men. Anything they do is observed, discussed, magnified in gossip and in the Press. Yet, from another point of view, it is this public and almost casual aspect of Spa diplomacy which constitutes its great political and social convenience, without which it would not have originated or survived.

Although the diplomatists at the spa are inevitably in the public eye, they are not necessarily at the spa for diplomatic reasons. As far as the public knows, they may be there simply for their health and pleasure; and indeed it is certain that health and pleasure are always among the objects which bring diplomatists to these pleasant spas. Accordingly, the public will never take too seriously the apparently and perhaps actually casual meetings of diplomatists there. There is a certain *négligé* air about social life at the spa which has a soothing effect on the public mind.

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Another reason for the prevalence of spa diplomacy in the nineteenth century was that it did actually bring statesmen and diplomatists together, accidentally, and yet frequently and almost regularly. This was an enormous convenience in public affairs. The Continental statesmen (unfortunately few of the English statesmen had the habit) betook themselves every year or oftener to one or other favourite spa for a "cure," with the result that they knew each other well. The Foreign Ministers of Germany, France, Russia, Austria, and Italy, not to mention the Foreign Ministers of the minor states, were sure to encounter each other many times, in the course of their official careers, at Baden, or some other well-known watering-place. Gortchakoff, the Russian Chancellor of the Bismarckian era, went to Baden-Baden practically every year, and in the end died there. In the early years of the twentieth century Edward of England, as Prince of Wales and later as king, made Marienbad fashionable for the great world. Napoleon III preferred Vichy, as the waters there suited his particular complaint, though he also went fairly frequently to Plombières and on one famous occasion he found it, now hardly known as a spa, the best place for an epoch-making conversation with Cavour. Some French statesmen of the Third Republic, particularly M. Clemenceau, liked Carlsbad. Although the Continental statesmen and diplomatists did not confine themselves to a single spa (except the Russians, who down to the time of Isvolsky remained very faithful to Baden-Baden), they were sure to come across each other at different times, in different places. The knowledge thus acquired of each other's personality, their familiarity with each other, was a highly useful element in the conduct of international affairs. It was one of the defects of the conduct of British foreign policy before the War that

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the Foreign Secretary of that time (Lord Grey of Fallodon) disliked travelling abroad, never went to the Continental spas, and not even to the capitals (except once, officially, to Paris in 1913), and therefore did not know the Foreign Ministers of the other Powers. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, who became Prime Minister in 1906 for two years, was excellently versed in foreign affairs and was a frequent visitor to Marienbad. He would have made an admirable Foreign Secretary; for the conduct of foreign affairs cannot be successfully based, as Grey appears to have based his, only on the study, however conscientious, of diplomatic reports and the memoranda and minutes of permanent officials; it requires the knowledge and sense of foreign affairs acquired by frequent residence and travel abroad, and by personal contact in foreign environment with the high statesmen of foreign countries.

It was often by mere accident that certain statesmen or diplomatists found themselves together at the same spa; sometimes it was by design. In any case it was a great convenience to all the world that there were places like Baden or Ems, and a fashion for using them, which made it likely or (if you took the trouble to find out) certain that you would meet so-and-so if you went there. In the years when Biarritz was becoming popular as a spring resort for people in high life, Bismarck went there twice, and had two very important conversations with Napoleon III, who likewise "happened" to be on holiday there.

Spas, however, were greatly used not merely for the holidays of diplomatists and statesmen, and for their more or less casual meetings. Grand congresses and conferences were sometimes held in such places. For this purpose the spas had many advantages. Statesmen and diplomatists, just as other people do, like to be comfortable. They work best

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in genial conditions, and they have a high standard of comfort. Their work is exacting and responsible; it often involves long hours at high pressure. Therefore relaxation, good food, concerts, promenades, a varied scenery with pleasant drives, are all helpful to the labours of these public men. They have to be lodged, and their staffs of secretaries and clerks have to be lodged too. A spa, except at the height of the season, offers all these amenities and facilities: numerous, large hotels for the statesmen, diplomatists, and their staffs; halls for conferences and committees; rooms where dignified official banquets can be given; dining-rooms and *salons* where the unofficial gatherings and conversations can take place; and, finally, the amusements of a fashionable centre, and the quiet, pleasant scenes of nature which constitute the environment of nearly every spa. In many respects a spa is a better place for a congress than are the great capitals where there is less air, less coolness, less quiet, less scenery, where the public is insistent and nervous, and where conflicts of *prestige* easily occur owing to the position of advantage so obviously enjoyed by the presiding Power in whose capital the congress is held. The Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle of 1818 (at that time a small city with mineral springs) and the Conference of Locarno in 1925 were among the most successful ever held.

A considerable part of the diplomatic history of nineteenth-century Europe could be written from the records of spas. Metternich, who was gay and fashionable, as well as intensely interested in diplomacy and great affairs, travelled frequently, and often stayed at the "baths" at Lucca, at Carlsbad, Marienbad (just opened), Franzensbad, and others. The pursuit of health could be combined with the transaction of diplomatic business. The "cure" was quite serious.

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My course of life is absolutely regular [he writes to his wife from Carlsbad in July 1818]. From six to eight in the morning one rides like a madman with seven or eight hundred other people. We meet again at nine o'clock for breakfast, and this moment is very pleasant. The tables are set up in front of each house, and those who are agreeable to each other sit together. Thus I have my breakfast taken to Schwarzenberg's house, because it is better situated than mine. We begin again to ride after breakfast until midday. I dine alternatively at my house, or with Charles or Joseph Schwarzenberg. We ride together every day, at five o'clock, for two or three leagues. I go to the hall at eight o'clock, or else I have a party for whist at my own house. All Carlsbad is in bed at ten.

This regular way of life and the requirements of the "cure" did not prevent Metternich from meeting statesmen who were a little later in the year to assemble at Aix-la-Chapelle; thus preliminary diplomatic work, so necessary if a conference is to succeed, could be transacted in pleasant circumstances.<sup>1</sup>

Aix-la-Chapelle was also a spa; and though it did no good to the rheumatism of either Metternich or his emperor, the Conference of 1818 worked excellently—*à merveille*, as Metternich wrote to his wife. Elaborate and difficult negotiations were completed successfully in eleven days. The Napoleonic War was finally "liquidated," and France was admitted to the Concert of Europe—and all this to the accompaniment of music. "We had concerts every day," wrote Metternich, concerts "of virtuosos of eight and nine years old," and one of four and a half, who played the *contre-basse*. "Our life proceeds always in the same way; we confer, we walk, we dine; I take part in the evening entertainment, and go to bed." Next year, back in the pleasant spa of Carlsbad, Metternich (in the fortunate absence of "the terrible Emperor

<sup>1</sup> Metternich, *Mémoires*, III, pp. 104–5.

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Alexander") was able to persuade a Conference of Ministers to adopt in three weeks an anti-revolutionary programme, more momentous than the previous thirty years of revolution.<sup>1</sup>

Münchengrätz is scarcely if at all known now, but it had a certain, though limited, vogue in the 'thirties of the last century. "The Three Courts"—Russia, Austria, and Prussia—had, not unnaturally, been alarmed by the July Revolution in Paris, which brought about the fall of the Bourbon dynasty, and was followed by revolution in Belgium. The Tsar Nicholas I, the Emperor Francis, and the Crown Prince of Prussia, with their Ministers of Foreign Affairs, met at Münchengrätz in September 1833 and practically renewed the Holy Alliance by an agreement not to admit in their own policies the British principle of "non-intervention." Münchengrätz was a small Bohemian spa, not far from another, Teplitz, which was the favourite watering-place of Frederick William III of Prussia, and which was frequently the place of diplomatic conversations.

The first important conference of Teplitz occurred in 1813, during the War of Liberation against Napoleon. Twenty-two years later (1835) there was another conference, attended by sovereigns and ministers, but only two, Frederick William III of Prussia and Metternich, were survivors of the Conference of 1813. The question before the later conference was the perennial question of the "Revolution"—the advance of liberalism, constitutionalism, and the spirit of revolt. Metternich felt more confident now. The liberal Tsar Alexander, who had been present at the Conference of 1813 and had (so Metternich averred) neglected the Austrian minister's advice, had been gathered to his fathers. In his place was the stern, uncompromising Nicholas I, the upholder of

<sup>1</sup> Metternich, *Mémoires*, III, p. 226.

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European order and of the principle of monarchy. He was not deaf to Metternich's warnings against the Revolution; together they would take the bull by the horns (Metternich wrote to his wife), but there was no bull now, only its elusive spectre; "and spectres," he added, "are more difficult to seize."

Life at the Conference of Teplitz had in it much of *dolce far niente*; there was a theatre, opera, a band, fine scenery. "A fresh prince arrived every day." Every now and then an intense period of work had to be undergone by the ministers; but there was nearly always time for strolling before and after dinner (which was taken at two o'clock); and there was always a reception or a play or an opera—*Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *Norma*, *Zampa*, all the favourites—in the evening. Conferences, like this of Teplitz, were always held in the summer when good weather was certain. In such favouring conditions the statesmen and diplomatists seldom failed to come to an agreement. On this occasion, the Conference of Teplitz of 1835, the subjects on which agreement was reached were the attitude of the three courts towards Turkey, Belgium, and the Carlist war in Spain.<sup>1</sup>

Plombières is now a little-known spa, not far from Dijon. Napoleon III went to Plombières which had been much patronized since the eighteenth century, and which is conveniently near to the Swiss frontier, in July 1858. Cavour, who was a very hard-working man, always took a fortnight's holiday from his Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and generally spent his time in Switzerland, in Geneva, or the Valais. On July 20, 1858, after a few days' relaxation in the country near Geneva, he arrived at Plombières and went unobtrusively to an hotel. On the following morning

<sup>1</sup> Metternich, *Mémoires*, VI, pp. 69–80, 86–92.

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he had a long conversation, from eleven o'clock to three, with Napoleon III in the villa in which the Emperor was living. The two statesmen arranged that in the war for the liberation of Italy, which was to ensue, France would be on the Sardinian side, and should receive at the end Nice and Savoy.

After separating for an hour, they met again at four o'clock and Napoleon took Cavour for a drive through the woods of the neighbourhood; they completed their conversations and arrangements. By 8 p.m. all was over; the statesmen shook hands and separated. Next day Cavour went off to complete his holiday in the more frequented spa, among kings and princes, at Baden-Baden. In 1859 Sardinia and France jointly engaged in war against Austria; the battles of Magenta and Solferino were the beginning of the end of Austria in Italy.

Gastein (or Wildbad-Gastein) is one of the pleasantest of the Austrian watering-places. The Emperor Francis Joseph and King William of Prussia were among the fashionable world which visited there in 1865. It was after Austria and Prussia had joined together to take the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein from Denmark. They were now jointly in possession of these ill-gotten gains, and found themselves very uneasy partners. The Convention of Gastein, in Bismarck's words, "papered over the cracks"; it arranged a partition of the duchies with which Austria had to be content for a time, though this only deferred the Austro-Prussian War for less than a year.

The spa or "bath" of Wildbad-Gastein is situated in the beautiful valley of the Ache, about six miles from Salzburg. The making of the famous Convention of Gastein of 1865 was not the first time that diplomats had assembled there. Two years earlier, in August 1863, King William of Prussia

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(afterwards the Emperor William I) had met the Emperor Francis Joseph at Gastein. Bismarck was anxious to speak with King William before the interview, so as to harden him against agreeing with Francis Joseph (which King William did, though the agreement was short-lived and led to nothing). Bismarck missed speaking to the king through failing to keep an appointment. He describes the reason in Chapter 17 of his *Reflections*:

At Gastein, on August 2, 1863, I was sitting under the fir-trees in the Schwarzenberg gardens by the deep gorge of the Ache. Above me was a nest of titmice, and watch in hand I counted the number of times in the minute the bird brought her nestlings a caterpillar or other insect. While I was observing the useful activity of these little creatures, I saw King William sitting alone on a bench on the Schillerplatz on the opposite side of the gorge. When the hour drew near to dress for dinner with the King, I went to my lodgings and there found a note from His Majesty informing me that he would await me on the Schillerplatz in order to speak to me about the meeting with the Emperor. I made all possible haste, but before I reached the King's apartments an interview had taken place between the two Sovereigns. If I had spent less time over my observations of nature, and had seen the King sooner, the first impression made on him by the Emperor's communications might have been other than it was.

The diplomatic fame of Gastein was soon overshadowed by that of Ems. A "quiet" watering-place, about ten miles from Coblenz, situated on the Lahn beneath steep vine-clad hills, Ems was little known until King William of Prussia went there. In July 1870 the acute crisis over the Hohenzollern candidature was bringing France and Prussia to the verge of war. The Duc de Gramont, Minister of Foreign Affairs of France, ordered the French ambassador, Benedetti, who

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was at Wildbad, a spa in the Black Forest, to go to Ems. The King of Prussia was there; and Benedetti was to obtain an audience, or several audiences, with him, and to secure from the proud old monarch a renunciation for ever of any Hohenzollern candidature to the throne of Spain. The task was too much for Benedetti who, perhaps not unnaturally, complains bitterly in his memoirs of its imposition upon him. In two audiences with the king he made good progress. Actually the Hohenzollern candidature was withdrawn. On July 13th he again approached the king, who was taking a morning walk on the *Promenade des Fontaines* by the side of the Lahn. But the agreeableness of the scene, the pleasant, peaceful circumstances of spa diplomacy, could not save France from a rebuff. "It is impossible for me to go as far as you wish," said the old king politely, when Benedetti asked for a renunciation *à tout jamais* of any claim to the crown of Spain. "You ask a new concession from me, and I cannot consent." He dismissed the ambassador and sent a telegram to Bismarck, who shortened the wording and then published it in the Press so as to be "a red rag to the Gallic bull." The "Ems telegram" is justly considered to be one of the causes of the Franco-German War.

In the 'eighties and 'nineties, spa life was more exclusively an affair of fashion, holiday, or cure. High politics, after the Franco-German War and the formation of the German Empire, became more and more national. Statesmen met each other when they had to do so, as at the Congress of Berlin, but they did not "forgather" nearly as much as before at summer spas. Bismarck, though he had gone on occasion to Gastein and to Biarritz, set in general a very bad example. Although a courteous and hospitable man, the fashionable life of the great world had no attraction for him. When he

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was not in Berlin, at the Wilhelmstrasse, he was in the depths of the country, on his Pomeranian estate, Varzin, or his Lauenburg estate, Freidrichsruh. Like many fierce old men, he became almost a misanthrope, clung to power, wrote endless dispatches, but rarely issued from his office in the Wilhelmstrasse, or from his country estate where, to the great inconvenience of everybody, he tended to conduct more and more of Germany's business. Lord Salisbury, though active and intensely interested in foreign affairs and diplomacy, and though in his younger days a great traveller, seldom went abroad in his mature years. His short sight and permanently abstracted mood would have made spa life with its unbroken succession of new and strange faces, its hum of conversation, its ever-present necessity for interest and etiquette, uncongenial to him. He preferred to live as a great country gentleman, with his library, his laboratory, and his Foreign Office work which he brought down or had sent down from London. His wife arranged noteworthy house-parties, and many eminent diplomatists made delightful and important visits to Hatfield; but these Hatfield parties, useful to international affairs in many ways, had obvious limitations, as well as obvious advantages, compared with the cosmopolitan high life of a Continental spa.

Mr. Gladstone went abroad far more than Lord Salisbury. He loved travelling, and he had friends in Germany, France, and Italy. He did not, however, go to spas; and if he went to an hotel on the French Riviera, it was simply to enjoy air and scenery, and to read in his spare time the Greek classics, the Latin fathers, and the eighteenth-century English masters of theology. He enjoyed long visits to Lord Acton's villa on the Tegern See in Bavaria, and there he met a cosmopolitan society, but it was literary, theological, historical, never

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political society. This was not an adequate substitute for spa life. It afforded no means of unofficial or semi-official diplomacy; it did not supply even a superficial acquaintance with foreign statesmen.

Some of the later statesmen did better. Lord Lansdowne, though he did not frequent Continental spas, was a great aristocrat, with connections among the high French aristocracy, a perfect command of the French tongue, and a real knowledge of Continental conditions based on boyhood's familiar visits to his relations abroad. Lord Rosebery also maintained the cosmopolitan character of genuine aristocracy, having many friends abroad, and his own villa at Naples. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, however, was the only high British statesman, outside the Royal Family, who habitually went abroad for the "cure." It was King Edward who raised Marienbad to the height of fashion; and Campbell-Bannerman, a rich though scarcely a fashionable man, went there too, and acquired a knowledge of foreign affairs and foreign statesmen with which the English public did not credit him. His death in 1908 removed from the British Cabinet the only statesman with first-hand knowledge of foreign affairs; for the Foreign Secretary, Grey, spent all his time in the Foreign Office reading reports and dispatches and giving interviews, or else in his country estate, or at his cottage on the Itchen.

The result of the decline of foreign travel and the decline of the "spa habit" was that in the five years before the World War the Foreign Ministers of Europe did not know each other. Each lived in his own strange world, the slave of his upbringing and environment, the victim of prejudices and alarms. The Russians had been the last travelling Foreign Ministers. Gortchakoff's successor, M. de Giers, frequently went on a visit round the capitals of Europe. He was industrious, level-

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headed, and thoroughly familiar with the world in which his business lay. Isvolsky, Russian Foreign Minister from 1906 to 1910, also travelled indefatigably in Europe. He was a frequent visitor at Baden-Baden, and had a villa on the Tegern See. The Russian Foreign Ministers, down to the time of Isvolsky, although their office was in St. Petersburg, remote from the great west of Europe, probably knew Europe better than their colleagues in any other capital. Isvolsky, however, was the last. Sazonov had originally intended to be a monk, and he seems to have retained something of the remoteness of the monk all his life. It is true he came with the Tsar Nicholas II to Great Britain in 1912, and stayed at Balmoral, and had conversations with Sir Edward Grey; but he was not a frequent traveller, like de Giers or Isvolsky. Grey never travelled at all, but left this duty to King Edward VII and a permanent official of the Foreign Office, and so helped to give rise to a legend of a personal policy of the monarch and of a royal plan for German encirclement. The German Chancellor, Bethmann-Hollweg, was a hard-working, conscientious official, immersed in his *bureau*, and spending such holidays as he took on his estate in Prussia at Hohenfinnow. When the gunfire began on the Danube, the Foreign Ministers of the Powers were really all strangers to each other; they only knew the ambassadors at their capitals, and had no clear idea of the characters and aims of the ministers who were behind these ambassadors and who were issuing instructions during the crisis. On July 26, 1914, Sir Arthur Nicolson, Permanent Under-Secretary of the Foreign Office, sent on behalf of Grey a telegram to the Foreign Ministers of France, Italy, and Germany, proposing a Conference to deal with the Austro-Russian crisis. The German Government refused to attend, and the Conference did not meet. It is

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conceivable that if the Foreign Ministers of Great Britain, France, Germany, and Austria had known each other better, through frequent visits at the capitals of Europe or in holiday spas, they would have communicated much more frankly with each other from the very inception of the crisis, and perhaps would have met together long before July 26th.

Since the inauguration of the Treaty of Versailles the League of Nations has been a means for enabling the Foreign Ministers of most of the states of the world, and particularly of the Great Powers, to meet with reasonable frequency, and to know each other intimately. The Great Powers, except the United States, Japan and Germany, have permanent seats in the Council of the League, which in practice meets four times a year. At these meetings the delegates of the Powers are usually the Foreign Ministers themselves; in the time of Briand, Stresemann, and Sir Austen Chamberlain this was the uniform practice. Thus the Foreign Ministers came to know each other and to regard each other as colleagues, as do members of the diplomatic corps. Something like the diplomacy of spa life was revived. "There is," wrote an international lawyer, "an after-dinner sweetness from which sentiments of international tenderness spring. The most savage hearts are softened then, the most severe countenances are relaxed in the smoke-laden beatitude of laborious digestion; the narcotic of generous wines reduces all asperities. M. Briand is aware of this, and loves to forgather with a companion in the quietude of Thoiry, or to regale Europe round the tables of the Bergues."<sup>1</sup> Alas! M. Briand's day too soon passed.

<sup>1</sup> Genêt, *Traité de Diplomatie*, I, p. 112. The Hôtel des Bergues at Geneva was where M. Briand habitually stayed.

## CHAPTER XV

### DIPLOMACY AND THE PRESS

NAPOLEON, commenting on the attacks of the famous Cologne publicist, Görres, called the Press the Fourth Estate. This, however, was during the European War of Liberation, when newspapers and pamphlets were proving to be a very effective instrument of Napoleon's enemies in support of hostilities; and indeed since that time the Press, or a certain section of it, has been a frequent collaborator with Ministries of War in their policies of preparation during peace or of action during war.

The collaboration of the Press with diplomacy has a shorter history, although journalism, in a pamphlet written by Swift, called *The Conduct of the Allies*, was employed by the British Government in preparing for the Peace of Utrecht as far back as the year 1711. It was not, however, until about the year 1856 that the Press became a constant and often effective collaborator (sometimes wholesome, sometimes sinister) with diplomacy. Cavour was the first diplomatist who discovered and used the far-reaching resources of the modern Press. He gave freely from his stores of information and ideas to journalists, or, in modern parlance, he "inspired" a large series of journals, not merely in Italy, but—what was much more effective at that time—in the other countries of Western Europe. Cavour's Press, of course, and his Press connections, were purely propagandist. The European Press was always fairly well informed about foreign policy and diplomatic affairs, whether with or without the assistance of the Press bureaux of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs. "Despite much talk since the War

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of *secret diplomacy* it will be seen . . . that surprisingly little went on in the foreign affairs of Europe that was not made public through the Press, even though frequently in a distorted form.”<sup>1</sup>

There are two kinds of Press diplomacy. One kind is servile and is paid for by the receipt of official information or cash. Some of this kind of Press diplomacy may be quite respectable, where the Foreign Minister or one of his assistants gives out considered views and information, in private, which the journalist is at liberty to use or not, as he thinks fit. It is not respectable when the official views or information find their place in a journal, in return for a subsidy or some other valuable consideration, such as the purchase of a large number of copies. A paid Press is what Bismarck (who used it freely) called a “reptile” Press; it inevitably is propagandist and tendentious, and its influence is almost certainly pernicious. An official or semi-official journal which is intended to be, and is known to be, the mouthpiece of a Foreign Office, is, of course, in a different position. It is not “reptile,” for its situation, known to the general public, is honest and above-board, and the responsibility for its contents attaches to its recognized official employer.

The second kind of Press diplomacy is that of independent journals which are in a position to obtain correct information, and which seriously assume responsibility for the influence they exercise. Of this kind is the great independent Press, so far as it exists on the Continent (and it does exist there), of the United States, and of Great Britain. *The Times* is probably the best example; in France in the middle decades of the nineteenth century it was the *Journal des Débats*; in Germany it

<sup>1</sup> O. J. Hale, *Germany and the Diplomatic Revolution. A Study in Diplomacy and the Press*, 1904–6 (1932), Preface.

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was the *Frankfurter Zeitung* down to the National Socialist Revolution; in the United States there are the *New York Times* and *Christian Science Monitor*, and other independent journals.

Diplomatists and journalists have been called colleagues.<sup>1</sup> They have much in common. Both professions deal with the relations between states; both have among their objects the gaining of information abroad, and also the influencing of public opinion abroad. For obtaining foreign information, diplomatists are in the better position. They have official sources of information; they have the public Press to draw upon; and they have in the diplomatic corps a well-informed society which talks very freely among its own members except when reasons of state enjoin silence. Journalists, on the other hand, have only such official information as Foreign Offices make public in *communiqués* or in receptions or in interviews given by ministers and officials; and they have their gossip of the journalists' club or café, obviously inferior to the informed gossip of the diplomatic corps. Nevertheless, Bismarck, who elaborated a highly efficient system of connection between his office and the Press, said: "One learns more from the newspapers than from official dispatches, as of course Governments use the Press in order frequently to say more clearly what they really mean. One must, however, know all about the connections of the different papers."<sup>2</sup> The "control," that is, the testing and sifting of information which comes into the Embassy or Foreign Office, is one of the most necessary and difficult technical tasks of diplomacy.

<sup>1</sup> Szilassy, *Traité pratique de Diplomatie* (1928), p. 142, cf. (same author) *Der Untergang der Donau-Monarchie*, p. 414, *Diplomatie und Weltkrieg*.

<sup>2</sup> To Busch, January 22, 1871. See Busch, *Bismarck, Some Secret Pages of His History* (trans. 1898), I, p. xx.

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On the other hand, the journalists are in a superior position to the diplomatists in regard to the influencing of public opinion abroad. The Press is more independent than the members of the diplomatic corps who are the servants of Governments and bound by official instructions. A diplomatist cannot openly criticize the Government or policies of a friendly state; and whatever he says in public (in so far as his official position permits him to say anything in public) is apt to be credited with an exaggerated significance. The journalist can exercise the useful function of critic of foreign affairs without involving his Government in unpleasant consequences. It is true that in private conversation the diplomatist exerts considerable influence; but the circle in which he moves is necessarily much narrower than the circle which is reached by a famous journal, by one of *les grands quotidiens*, as the French call them. The circle of the diplomatist is that of official and high life; the sphere of readers of a good political journal is the educated people who are the ultimate makers or controllers of policy.

The "independence" of the Press has, naturally, to be understood with due qualification. The editor of a journal is seldom the owner; and the owner may be an old family, a rich business man, a "millionaire," a limited liability company, or a powerful and widely influential syndicate. Ownership or control by a rich magnate—a Northcliffe, Rothermere, Beaverbrook, or William Randolph Hearst—is probably the most independent, though not necessarily the most public-spirited or least biased kind. The best of all kinds of ownership, less common now than formerly, is hereditary ownership by a solid, respectable, well-established bourgeois family, such as the Walter family which owned *The Times* in the nineteenth century, the Bertin family who owned the *Journal des Débats*.

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in the same period, the Sonnemann family who owned the *Frankfurter Zeitung*.<sup>1</sup>

The distribution of French journals is not, as a rule, very highly organized; their circulation is seldom enormous; they have no great revenue from advertisement. They are said, therefore, in certain cases, to rely for their profit on the payment of subsidies from a particular individual, from a political group, or even from foreign Government secret service funds. During the Russo-Japanese War, the Russian Foreign Office was heavily subsidizing Paris journals. Isvolsky, while ambassador at Paris from 1910 to 1917, was dispensing Russian secret service funds to some Paris journals. On one occasion, at any rate, a credit of as much as 300,000 francs for Press subsidies was opened for him by the Russian Government.<sup>2</sup> Besides Paris newspapers, some sixty provincial journals received Russian propaganda material.<sup>3</sup> This was the kind of Press of which the Emperor William II wrote, in a letter to the Tsar, comparing it with the merely ignorant and ill-informed journals: "But more dangerous, and at the same time loathsome, is that part of the Press which writes what it is paid for. The scoundrels who do such dirty work are in no fear of starving. They will always incite the hostility of one nation against the other, and when at last, by their hellish devices, they have brought about the much-desired collision, they sit down and watch the fight which they organized, resting well assured that the profit will be theirs, no matter what the issue may be. In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, what is vulgarly

<sup>1</sup> The Simon-Sonnemann family gave up their interest in the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, as announced on June 1, 1934 (*The Times*, June 2, 1934).

<sup>2</sup> See Poincaré, *Memoirs* (English trans.), II, pp. 25-32. Cp. Siebert, *Der Diplomatische Schriftwechsel Isvolsky, 1911-14* (1924), II, pp. 315-317, 324-6, 390-4; M. Carroll, *French Public Opinion and Foreign Affairs*, pp. 261-72.

<sup>3</sup> Carroll, op. cit., p. 142.

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called *public opinion* is a mere forgery.”<sup>1</sup> This last sentence of the Kaiser’s would seem to be supported by a remark which a high ambassador recently made to an acquaintance, that “any nation could have its views completely transformed and reversed by a Press campaign in five months.”

The powerful union of French iron-masters and armament firms, called the *Comité des Forges*, is believed to control one or even more than one of the best-known French daily newspapers. Although French newspapers are usually classed as *journaux d’information* or *journaux d’opinion*, the chief business of all of them is to supply opinions. The French reader has a personal interest in the journal which he reads, and demands opinions from it—naturally opinions along the line of his own inclinations. Therefore the articles in French journals are usually signed; the authors, like “Pertinax” (M. Géraud) of the *Echo de Paris*, M. Sauerwein of the *Matin*, or the late M. Gauvain of the *Journal des Débats*, have been able to gain a definite vogue and to establish a certain degree of ascendancy over their public. The French Chamber of Deputies has never since 1877 been dissolved except at its legal term, every four years. It is therefore comparatively little influenced by the local constituencies between the times of general elections. The local or provincial journals, on their side, though there are exceptions, usually echo the views of the Paris Press; and their leading articles are frequently written in Paris.<sup>2</sup> The Chamber of Deputies, seated as it were permanently in the capital, independent of provincial constituencies, is exposed to the full blast of Parisian public opinion; and of this so compelling opinion the Parisian Press is the expression, and to a large extent the creator. The influence of the Press

<sup>1</sup> *Die Grosse Politik der Europäischen Kabinette*, XXVI, p. 788.

<sup>2</sup> E. M. Carroll, *French Public Opinion and Foreign Affairs* (1931), p. 10.

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upon policy and diplomacy is, accordingly, very definite and powerful. On the other hand, the practical monopoly of foreign telegraphic news enjoyed by the Havas Agency offers to the French Government (the owner of the telegraphs) opportunities of influencing French public opinion through this channel. Also, every Foreign Office, except those of Great Britain and the United States, has one particular organ which it favours with information and opinions, and through which it can express itself semi-officially. The *Temps* is believed to be the organ of the Quai d'Orsay, as in Bismarck's time the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* was of the Wilhelmstrasse, and the Vienna *Neue Freie Presse* of the Ballplatz.

In Germany the newspapers are owned by limited liability companies or are the private property of a bourgeois family. Circulation, compared with British, American, or even French figures, is small, and is usually local or regional; but the influence of these journals is not to be judged by the circulation figures. Their opinions may be widely quoted, and great attention paid to them, both at home and abroad. Representing, as many of them did, the views of a strong political party or group (as, for instance, the *Frankfurter Zeitung* represented the Liberals), they were (down to 1933) immune from the influence of Government, which, except in the time of Bismarck, seems to have made little or no effort to capture them. The *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* was, however, always semi-official throughout the Bismarckian and later Imperial period. Indeed, in this later Imperial period British diplomatists believed that many journals were officially "inspired" in their comments on foreign affairs. Theodore Schiemann, who wrote a weekly review of foreign affairs for the *Kreuzzeitung*, was in receipt of payments from Foreign Office secret service funds.<sup>1</sup> The British minister at Munich,

<sup>1</sup> Bülow, *Memoirs* (trans.), II, p. 13.

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Fairfax Cartwright, deplored the policy of the "official" (that is "officially inspired") German Press to foster the idea that Germany's isolation was due to manœuvres of the British Government.<sup>1</sup>

The French and German journals are the subject of observation and comment outside their own country, and therefore have weight in the conduct of high diplomacy. Before the World War the Vienna *Neue Freie Presse* and, in the middle nineteenth century, the Brussels *Indépendance Belge*, had a European reputation. The London *Times* was highly regarded all over Europe, and had capable correspondents in every capital. The German public men, however, complained (except for *The Times*) of "the paucity of British newspapers" which were represented by their own correspondents in Berlin; they alleged that this had a bad effect on the problem of Anglo-German understanding.<sup>2</sup> The excellent Swiss journals were not noted outside Switzerland. The advent of the League of Nations has naturally made foreign peoples direct their attention more than before to Switzerland; and the *Journal de Genève* has taken advantage of this opportunity to establish an international reputation and to wield an influence in favour of international understanding.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, in 1932 this journal, too, was said to have come under the control of a syndicate not domiciled in Switzerland.

The first journalist who appears deliberately to have set himself to take a part in high diplomacy, and with considerable success, was M. de Blowitz, *Times* correspondent at Paris from

<sup>1</sup> To Grey, January 12, 1907, in *British Documents on the Origins of the World War*, VI, p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> *British Documents*, VI, p. 17.

<sup>3</sup> For the European Press, see *The Economist* (London), 1929, February 9th, March 23rd, 30th, April 6th; P. Carr, *French Journalism, Contemporary Review*, June 1930; Middleton, *The French Political System* (1932). Szilassy, *Traité*, pp. 142 ff. *Untergang*, pp. 414 ff.

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1873 to 1903. Blowitz, whose original name was Oppert, was born at Blowitz in Bohemia. While correspondent at Paris he made himself very useful to Thiers in the veteran statesman's critical presidency at the end of the Franco-German War. After this, all statesmen and diplomatists in Paris apparently formed the habit of speaking with Blowitz. The fashionable and ambitious Bülow, who was a secretary at the German Embassy at Paris from 1878 to 1884, naturally saw a good deal of the influential *Times* correspondent. In the *Memoirs*, composed towards the end of his life, Bülow wrote:<sup>1</sup>

Like everybody else in a public position, Blowitz had intrigues to combat and difficulties to overcome. Once, as he affirmed by Holstein, whom he himself considered the greatest living intriguer, he had been denounced to the owner of *The Times*, Mr. Walter, in such dark terms that Walter decided to go to Paris and look into matters for himself. Suddenly he appeared in Blowitz's presence. Without for an instant losing his self-control, Blowitz invited him to lunch next day *à la fortune du pot*, as he said emphatically. When Walter appeared in the elegantly appointed flat of Blowitz, he found all the accredited ambassadors in Paris and the Papal nuncio waiting there to welcome him. Blowitz said carelessly to the editor: *Mon cher ami, faites la maîtresse de la maison et prenez place en face de moi.* They sat down to lunch—Mr. Walter between the English and the German ambassadors, Lord Lyons and Prince Chlodwig Hohenlohe. When he left he begged Blowitz to accept a very considerable increase in salary. A man in such a social position was worth his weight in gold. At a banquet which I gave to the International Press Congress, held in Berlin a year before my resignation, I related a personal experience of mine with Blowitz. "When I was at our Paris Embassy at the beginning of the 'eighties," I said, "I asked Herr Blowitz one day in a melancholy mood, because my promotion seemed so slow—they call it 'lieutenant's melancholy'

<sup>1</sup> Bülow, *Memoirs* (trans., 1932), IV, 451.

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in the army—whether he thought I should have any chance in journalism. ‘I can get you a job at once,’ answered Blowitz, ‘at thirty thousand francs a year.’ That increased my self-confidence at the time, and the thought gives me pleasure even to-day.”

Prince Hohenlohe, who was Bülow’s chief at the Paris Embassy, and afterwards Chancellor of the German Empire, consulted Blowitz frequently on high affairs of state. In his *Memoirs*, in the Paris years, he often mentions meetings with Blowitz at famous houses of ministers or great ladies—the Duc Decazes, Princess Trubetskoi. Before he sent to *The Times* the article of May 5, 1875, which was to reverberate over all Europe (disclosing the imminent possibility of a war between France and Germany), Blowitz discussed the “standpoint of his article” with Hohenlohe, though he did not defer to the Prince’s criticisms. When the Congress of Berlin opened at the conclusion of the Russo-Turkish War in 1878, both Hohenlohe and Blowitz were transferred, for the time of the Congress only, by their respective authorities, to Berlin. The great Bismarck, the busiest man in Europe, was not above letting Hohenlohe know that he would like to meet *The Times* correspondent: “He wishes to see Blowitz at my house, and will let me know when he is coming that I may arrange with Blowitz.” The meeting accordingly took place. Blowitz was so much a part of the Congress that he was able to ask for an advance copy of the final treaty, in order to publish it before all the other newspapers in *The Times*, “but the Chancellor considered that impossible.”<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, Blowitz managed to obtain a copy and this was published in *The Times* on the day on which the Treaty was signed at Berlin, July 13, 1878.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hohenlohe, *Memoirs* (trans., 1906), II, p. 225, cp., II, pp. 144, 211.

<sup>2</sup> The Treaty of Berlin was signed at 2.30 p.m. on July 13th. The text was in the hands of *The Times* correspondent at Brussels in time for him to be able to telegraph it to London, and to have it printed in the second edition of July 13th, Saturday.

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The great historic example of the association of diplomatist and Pressman is that of Bismarck and Busch. Moritz Busch was editor of the patriotic *Grenzboten*, and was a strong Nationalist. On February 1, 1870, he received at Leipsic an invitation from the "Literary Bureau" of the Foreign Office of the North German Confederation to join the office. His chief duty would be "to carry out the instructions of the Chancellor [Bismarck] in Press matters." Herr Busch had done some service by writing, on instructions supplied by the Foreign Office, some articles for various periodicals, and particularly for the *Preussische Jahrbücher*, although this series was supposed to be an unofficial publication of scientific history. Arrived at the Foreign Office in the Wilhelmstrasse, he was taken to see Bismarck. The great man said: "You understand our politics and the German question in particular. I intend to get you to write notes and articles for the papers from such particulars and instructions as I may give you, for of course I cannot myself write leaders." Busch accepted the position, and thereafter saw Bismarck very frequently—sometimes "as often as five or even eight times in one day." The journals to which he supplied articles were the semi-official *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, the *Spenersche Zeitung*, and the *Neue Preussische Zeitung*, all nationalist organs. Occasionally he wrote letters to the *Kölnische Zeitung*, the organ of the Catholic or Centre Party. He also had relations with the celebrated *Augsburger Allgemeine Zeitung*, a strongly Liberal journal, the *Magdeburger Zeitung*, "certain Silesian, East Prussian, and South-German organs," and a paper called the *Norddeutsche Correspondenz*, "which had recently been founded with a view to influencing the English Press." Busch's method, after writing an article or letter, was to send it direct to the editor of the journal in which it should appear; these contributions "were

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always accepted without alteration." He does not mention that any money passed in these transactions; but it is well known that Bismarck did spend money upon influencing the Press, from the "Guelf Fund" or "reptile fund," derived from the Crown lands of the exiled George V of Hanover.<sup>1</sup> The Chancellor kept him very busy, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., and again from 5 to 10 or later, even on Sundays, and sometimes summoned him from bed at midnight to receive pressing instructions.<sup>2</sup> Prince Bismarck, writes Busch, "thoroughly understood the business of journalism." He even had means to introduce his views and messages into British and Belgian journals.<sup>3</sup>

The inspired articles in German newspapers would naturally be quoted abroad. Sometimes they were published as if written from abroad. The *Kölnische Zeitung*, an old-established Rhenish daily, had always had a close connection with Paris. Busch mentions Bismarck's instructions for a letter, purporting to give the ideas of a French Liberal, to be dated from Paris and published in the *Kölnische Zeitung*. The letter, as originally drafted, expressed Bismarck's ideas correctly, but did not appear to the Chancellor to be sufficiently in French style. He said:

Yes, you have correctly expressed my meaning. The composition is good both as regards its reasoning and the facts which it contains. But no Frenchman thinks in such a logical and well-ordered fashion. Yet the letter is understood to be written by a Frenchman. It must contain more gossip, and you must pass lightly from point to point. In doing so, you must adopt an altogether French standpoint. A Liberal Parisian writes the letter and gives his opinion as to the position of his party towards the German question.

<sup>1</sup> S. B. Fay, *The Influence of the Pre-War Press in Europe*, *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, Vol. 64, March 1931.

<sup>2</sup> Busch, op. cit., I, pp. 1-7.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, I, p. 51.

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Finally, as Busch was not sufficiently light-handed and Gallic, the Chancellor, sitting at his desk in full military uniform, dictated the greater part of the article himself. It contained under the guise of impartial advice to the German Liberals an elaborate insinuation that Napoleon III, or at least his entourage, was looking for an occasion to destroy the new French Liberal constitution.

The versatile and indefatigable Bismarck was equally ready to dictate an article "from Rome." The Vatican Council was in session in 1870, and was considering whether it should agree to the promulgation of the dogma of Papal Infallibility. Beust, Austrian Chancellor, was reported in *The Times* and other European organs as sending a warning dispatch to the Curia "not to challenge Europe." Bismarck, always alert to deny that there was any such thing as "Europe" (which would have been fatal to his policy and plans for German national state-interest), and also to prevent Beust from assuming leadership, dictated to Busch a letter from "a Correspondent in Rome" for the *Kölnische Zeitung*: "We do not know if the analysis of the dispatch in question is correct; but we have reason to doubt it. Trautmansdorf (Austrian ambassador at Rome) has read no note and received no instructions to make any positive declaration. . . . He has communicated to Cardinal Antonelli such parts of the information that reached him from Vienna as he thought proper, and he certainly made that communication in as considerate a form as possible." Busch was charged with many similar commissions about this time; for instance, to help to prevent a Franco-Austrian alliance by advertising loudly the Archduke Albrecht's visit to Paris and reproducing "hints" about its intention; and to influence the Spanish people (through the *Imparcial* newspaper!) not to accept the Duc de Monpensier as king. Prince

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Reuss, Prussian ambassador at St. Petersburg in 1870, was given articles for reproduction in the Russian Press. As the likelihood of a war with France grew greater, Bismarck took care to leave no stone unturned so that the French reputation should be prejudiced in the eyes of Germany and of Europe. On April 12, 1870, he dictated to Busch for the *Kölnische Zeitung* an article commenting on the decline of French manners, the decadence of the nation, and the "fact" that the Empress Eugénie had repeatedly recommended young Germans as models for the youth of France. Sometimes the Chancellor made a mistake in his Press diplomacy, but luck saved him. He expressed disapproval, through Busch and the *Kölnische Zeitung*, of the appointment of the Duc de Gramont as French Foreign Minister. As a matter of fact, Gramont was a minister to be supported at all costs, for he played right into Bismarck's hand in the critical negotiations of July 1870.

That the Press can be used by diplomacy as a very powerful agent is shown by Bismarck's use of it in order to bring about the Austro-German alliance of 1879. There was no obstacle on the part of public opinion in Austria; but in Germany the public were apparently not interested in the scheme, and the old Emperor was positively hostile. Bülow, whose father was right-hand man to Bismarck in the German Foreign Office at this time, writes:<sup>1</sup>

Acting on his principle that, when necessary, all dogs must bark, Prince Bismarck, to break down the opposition of the old Emperor, had organized a mighty Press campaign. I worked in the special Press department organized for this purpose, which Radowitz conducted. The aim of this campaign was neither to intimidate the Russians nor please the Austrians. It was to give the old Emperor the impression that the whole country, from

<sup>1</sup> Bülow, *Memoirs*, IV, 512.

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the Meuse to Memel, wished the alliance with Austria, and approved it. To this effect we, Radowitz, little Professor Aegidi, the intelligent Legation Secretary, Rudolf Lindau, and I, composed "letters to the editor," emanating from all parts of Germany, which were submitted to the Emperor as expressions of public feeling. For all his common sense and sagacity, his cleverness and perception in many matters, William I was almost naïve when it came to the modern Press campaign and publicity nonsense. He really believed he was listening to the voice of the people when this manufactured correspondence was laid before him. When we headed them as coming from the Rhine we expressed our dire forebodings that should the treaty not be achieved the green Rhine waters might not be secure from French attacks, and this caused alarm from Mannheim to Düsseldorf. In other letters, purporting to come from Munich, Stuttgart, and Dresden, the ancient sympathies of the Bavarians, Swabians, and Saxons for the Danube-Germans were recalled; in "messages" from the provinces of Eastern Prussia, we painted the "Cossack" menace in grimly realistic colours. The mastery with which this Press storm was organized showed Bismarck's iron hand in the velvet glove.

Every Foreign Office and some ambassadors and ministers have relations with the Press. Bismarck seems to have had perhaps the most elaborate system of all for influencing the Press; most Foreign Offices confine their Press relations to the issue of *communiqués*, and to the giving out of a customary "ration" of information to journalists in meetings which take place regularly in the presence of the Foreign Minister or one of his high officials. Some ambassadors have had occasion to rue the day when they became involved with a newspaper. Perhaps the most celebrated instance is that of Sir Lionel Sackville-West, afterwards Lord Sackville. He was British Minister at Washington in 1889 when President Grover Cleveland, having completed his first term of office, was

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standing for election again. Sir Lionel received a letter from California from an alleged formerly British citizen, asking for advice on the way he should vote. Thoughtlessly, Sir Lionel replied that Mr. Cleveland was likely to be the most suitable presidential candidate for British interests, particularly in regard to the Tariff question. This undiplomatic communication (which had been enticed out of him by an opponent of the Cleveland candidature) was of course published with enormous headlines in the newspaper Press, as an interference of the "British Lion" in favour of Grover Cleveland. The election had not taken place, so naturally Mr. Cleveland's Secretary of State sent Lord Sackville his passport. Lord Salisbury, who was then Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary, resented this action of the United States Government, and refused to appoint a British Minister to Washington until Mr. Cleveland went out of office five months later.

The *Daily Telegraph* interview with the Emperor William II is another celebrated instance of diplomacy which would much better have been kept away from the Press. It also shows, in an unfavourable light, the method of working of the German Foreign Office. Bülow tells the story quite truthfully in his *Memoirs*. At the beginning of October 1908 he was at Norderney, where he had a country home, when he received from Rominten, the Emperor William's hunting-box, "a bulky and almost illegible manuscript, written on bad typing paper, with a covering letter asking me if I saw any objection to its publication in the columns of an English newspaper—a publication the Emperor very much desired." Bülow says that he was too busy with other State business to read the manuscript, so he sent it off unread to the Foreign Office with injunctions to have it carefully revised. It came back, after two high officials had worked on it, with three not very important

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corrections. Bülow still did not read the manuscript but sent it back to the Emperor's secretary at Rominten with the three alterations suggested by the Foreign Office. The article, thus corrected, was published in the *Daily Telegraph*, purporting to be the conversation or interview of a retired diplomatist with the Emperor. In reality it was the work of Colonel Stuart-Wortley, at whose mansion, Highcliffe, in the Isle of Wight, the Emperor had stayed in November 1907. Both the Emperor and Colonel Stuart-Wortley believed that by using the English Press for the expression of the Emperor's views on England they would ease the existing tension and greatly help Anglo-German relations. The exact opposite was the result. When Bülow, on October 29th, received the telegraphic summary of the *Daily Telegraph* article he read it "with startled amazement." It stated that the ordinary Englishman had an "obstinate misconception of the Emperor's feelings towards England," and that the Emperor's "large stock of patience is giving out." During the Boer War France and Russia had "invited" the Emperor to join with them in intervening, for "the moment had come, they said, not merely to save the Boer Republics, but also to humiliate England to the dust." The Emperor had refused, and had sent to Queen Victoria a copy of his answer. Also, during "Black Week," when British defeats followed each other in rapid succession, the Emperor drew up a plan of campaign, which he sent to the Queen: "and as a matter of curious coincidence let me add that the plan which I formulated ran very much on the same lines as that which was actually adopted by Lord Roberts and carried by him into successful operation." Such enormities and sad effusions, as Bülow called them, produced naturally a most unfortunate effect, not merely in Great Britain, but in Germany, too. The chief fault, however, lay with Bülow, for

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not himself reading and revising the Stuart-Wortley manuscript before authorizing its publication; and with the officials of the Foreign Office who let it pass with only minor corrections. Bülow could only declare in the Reichstag: "The knowledge that the publication of his conversations has not produced the effect which the Emperor intended in England, and has worked deep excitement and painful regret in our country, will—and this is the firm conviction which I have gained during these days of stress—induce His Majesty in future to observe that reserve even in private conversations which is equally indispensable in the interest of a uniform policy for the authority of the Crown." It was grossly unfair of the Chancellor to throw the blame on the Kaiser.<sup>1</sup>

In 1908–9, owing to the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina by Austria-Hungary, there was a war crisis between that Power and Serbia. The agitation was increased when the Hungarian authorities arrested fifty-three "Southern Slavs" (Croats and Serbs who were Austrian or Hungarian subjects) and tried them for treason. The trial was held at Agram (now Zagreb), and was generally considered by the European Press to be outrageous. The accused, though condemned, were subsequently pardoned. While the Agram treason trial was in progress, Dr. Friedjung, a former Professor of History at the Vienna Academy of Commerce, foreign correspondent to leading German newspapers, and author of *Der Kampf um die Vorherrschaft in Deutschland*, wrote an article which was published in the *Neue Freie Presse*, March 25, 1909, accusing the Serbo-Croat Coalition (a political party of Austro-

<sup>1</sup> The "Daily Telegraph Affair" is to be found in Bülow, *Memoirs* (trans., 1931), II, pp. 328–30, and 341–50; *Die Grosse Politik der Europäischen Kabinette*, XXIV, pp. 165–210; *British Documents on the Origins of the World War*, VI, pp. 201–26. The *Grosse Politik* reproduces in full the *Daily Telegraph* article with the German Foreign Office alterations.

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Hungarian and Southern Slavs) of being in receipt of secret service money from the Serbian Government. The Serbo-Croat Coalition brought an action against Friedjung. The case was heard at Vienna, and it was proved that the documents, on which Friedjung had based his article and which had been supplied to him by the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Ministry, were forgeries. In the interest of public order, the plaintiffs (the Serbo-Croat Coalition) eventually consented to settle the case out of court. It subsequently transpired (1910) that the documents had been forged by a Serb, in the Austro-Hungarian Legation at Belgrade, perhaps with the knowledge of Count Forgach, the Minister at Belgrade, and paid for out of Austro-Hungarian Foreign Ministry funds. The whole story furnishes curious evidence on the relations of the official Austro-Hungarian diplomacy and the Vienna Press when Count Aehrenthal was Foreign Minister.<sup>1</sup>

After the death of King Edward VII, Marienbad continued to attract fashion and diplomacy. Among others, Sir Fairfax Cartwright, the British ambassador to Austria-Hungary, and M. Crozier, the French ambassador, were regular visitors. In the summer of 1911 the Agadir or Morocco crisis was in an acute phase. Mr. Lloyd George, the British Chancellor of the Exchequer, had made the now famous speech, challenging, defiant, towards Germany, of July 21st. M. Jules Cambon and Herr von Kiderlen-Waechter were engaged in conversations at Berlin, with a view to coming to some arrangement for compensation in the French Congo to Germany, in return for German recognition of French ascendancy in Morocco. They appeared to be unable to arrive at agreement. If Germany

<sup>1</sup> The facts of the Friedjung Case (and of a simultaneous and similar action which was brought against the Clerical Vienna *Reichspost*) are in H. W. Steed, *Through Thirty Years* (1924), I, pp. 308–16, and R. W. Seton-Watson, *The Southern Slav Question* (1911), Chapters X and XII.

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insisted on her point of view, France would resist. If war ensued, as seemed only too probable, England clearly would be on the side of France; it would be European War or World War.

This was the view of Dr. Sigmund Münz, a correspondent of the Vienna *Neue Freie Presse*, who was in Marienbad at the time. He "smelt powder," and felt it his duty to warn the European public, and especially the German public, that Germany's demands were excessive and that if she insisted on them she would have to fight England as well as France. Münz could have sent his warning privately to the German Foreign Office, but did not think that this would have much effect. He resolved to warn the German public, by means of a communication to the *Neue Freie Presse*.

Münz had several conversations both with the French and the British ambassadors. He met or "waylaid" Cartwright on the Kirchenplatz one morning near the Colonnade about eight o'clock, and he extracted some remarks from the English diplomatist. According to Münz, Cartwright said: "England is completely on the side of France. . . . A feeling is prevalent that Germany is defiant. This everlasting challenging begins to be serious." These, and a number of other "strong" statements, were telephoned by Münz to the editor of the *Neue Freie Presse* at Vienna, with injunctions that the source of the information should be carefully concealed. It was not what in journalists' jargon is called an "interview," because Cartwright had given no permission to publish. Next morning (August 24, 1911) the article was published as being by an English diplomatist in an important position. The article, of course, went the round of Europe, and attracted particular attention in Germany. Münz believed that it had the effect of inducing the German Government to modify its attitude

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on the Morocco-Congo controversy, and to accept a comparatively moderate compensation. On the other hand, England for the second time (the first occasion having been Mr. Lloyd George's speech) seemed to have "challenged" or threatened Germany, and Cartwright was accused of faults of indiscretion and meddlesomeness. Münz maintained that the only fault was that of the Vienna editor who by inserting the words "by an English diplomat" had changed what was designed to be merely a well-informed article from a correspondent into an "interview" with the identity divulged.<sup>1</sup> The British diplomatist did not come very well out of the controversy. He was extremely anti-German, and is said, as *chargé d'affaires* at Munich in his confidential reports to the Foreign Office, to have represented German editors as "saying unfriendly things about England which are actually not in the German papers at all."<sup>2</sup>

If one of those periods of strain, irritation, doubt, and apprehension called a "war-crisis" occurs, a great newspaper has a heavy responsibility. In the "Twelve Days" from the delivery of the Austrian ultimatum to Serbia down to the outbreak of the European War (July 23rd to August 3, 1914), *The Times* had a very definite policy to advocate. The British Cabinet was not of one mind; or as the "Foreign Editor" of *The Times* subsequently expressed it, "within the British Cabinet and without, desperate efforts were being made by the partisans of Germany to persuade England to stand aside." He adds: "In *The Times* office we knew of those efforts." Therefore an editorial, or "leading article," was written for

<sup>1</sup> The "Cartwright Interview" is dealt with in *Die Grosse Politik der Europäischen Kabinette*, XXIX, pp. 237-244; *British Documents on the Origins of the War*, VII, pp. 837-45; and by Münz in *The Contemporary Review*, March 1930.

<sup>2</sup> S. B. Fay, op. cit., in *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, vol. 64, March 1931.

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publication on the morning of July 31st to the effect that, in the event of a German and French mobilization, the duty of England would be plain. "The Angel of Death is abroad. We 'may almost hear the beating of his wings.' He may yet 'spare us and pass on'; but if he visits those with whom we stand, we must pay our share of the fell tribute with stout hearts."

The final proof of this article had just been passed for press when (wrote the Foreign Editor), "towards midnight on Thursday, July 30th, one of the younger members of the Conservative Party, Sir (then Mr.) George Lloyd, afterwards Governor of Bombay, came into my room."

"It's all up," he said. "The Government are going to rat."

"You don't mean that they are going to back down to Germany and betray the country?" I exclaimed.

"Yes," he answered. "I have just seen General Sir Henry Wilson, the chief of the Imperial General Staff, who has told me what the position is."

"What are the Opposition leaders doing?" I asked.

"They are going into the country to play lawn tennis," he ejaculated bitterly.

It was arranged that Mr. Lloyd should go off in a motor-car to fetch back the absent Opposition leaders.

On August 1st an editorial conference was in session at *The Times* office, Lord Northcliffe presiding. Lord Northcliffe turned to the Foreign Editor and said gravely:

"I have trustworthy information that the Government are going to 'rat.' We have hitherto taken a strong line in favour of intervention by the side of France and Russia. But, if the Government give way, what do you think we should do?"

"We have no choice," I answered. "If the Government 'rat,'

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we must pull off our wigs and go bald-headed against the Government.”<sup>1</sup>

\* The efforts of *The Times*, as expressed in its powerful, but never excited, leading articles, as well as in its selection of news, undoubtedly helped to fortify the attitude of public and Government in the direction of participation in the War. This is an instance of the Press exerting influence on Government. Conversely, Government is frequently able to use the Press as a diplomatic instrument.

Once a Government has decided to stand firm on a certain policy, the journalists become instruments for the mobilization of public opinion, diplomacy is no longer secret, and the vivid representation of humanity as blindfolded on the verge of a precipitate plunge into the abyss of war becomes largely a myth. To prepare the public and to win support, the Government’s position is usually made clear both at home and abroad through the medium of the newspaper Press.<sup>2</sup>

The Press engages in Diplomacy; and Diplomacy exerts influence through the Press. The people, exposed to this double impact, is unconsciously guided in various directions; or else, if it tries to think for itself, falls into error. The responsibility of the Press is so great that wars, in so far as they are not made by Governments, are made by the Press.<sup>3</sup> And the Press, which is often reckless, is seldom (except when controlled and censored, as in war-time, or under Fascism or National Socialism) unanimous. The public is capricious, and finds the justification of its caprices in the Press. Every citizen who professes to be educated and interested in public affairs has a chosen

<sup>1</sup> H. W. Steed, *Through Thirty Years*, II, pp. 6–10.

<sup>2</sup> Hale, *Germany and the Diplomatic Revolution*, p. 5.

<sup>3</sup> Lechartier, *Le Rôle International de la Presse*, in *L’Esprit International*, January 1928, pp. 52–4.

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paper which he regularly reads, where he finds his views and prepossessions expressed in a vigorous manner, as he himself would like to be able to express them. Seeing his views thus emphatically and lucidly explained, he is confirmed in the belief in his own power of judgment, and feels influential, powerful. His journal, however, does not merely reflect his opinions, it develops them and leads him. He has really lost his freedom and surrendered his power of judgment. It is obvious that diplomacy, far from abandoning all effort to establish relations with the Press, should make all the greater effort at a co-operation which, however, in the public interest, must not be secret, and must be based upon mutual respect of diplomacy and Press.

It is as the controller, the checker, of public statements that the Press probably performs its greatest service in regard to Diplomacy. It is impossible for any Ministry of Foreign Affairs or other department, or for any officials, to give out information in a free country which will not be immediately checked by journalists and journals, and exposed if it is false. Naturally the Press cannot prevent a minister from publishing an "in-discreet" telegram, and so influencing diplomacy, as Bismarck published the "Ems telegram" in order to hasten the chariots of war; but false statements of fact can scarcely escape the vigilance of the Press.

The greatest danger in free states is from the great "combines," so prominent a feature in Great Britain and the United States. For various reasons, neither France nor Germany, nor indeed any country except Great Britain and the United States, has great combines. French and German newspapers influence Paris or Berlin, or the localities, each of which has its own particular journal. In Great Britain and the United States a single "combine" may own or control journals in various

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cities and regions all over the country. News, information, opinions, advertisements, may all be co-ordinated from one central office, so as to direct the citizens' minds in one direction, in every corner of the land. In the end the system might lead to a monopoly of news and views in the power of one or two giant combines.

In countries where great Press combines exist, diplomacy works under a serious handicap as it depends for its support on free and independent public opinion. The remedy lies with the public, who, if they realize that the combines are literally dictating views to them, can change their patronage to independent journals, if such exist. Things have not come to such a pass that an independent journal can nowhere be found.

Actually the record of the Press in great international crises is not very encouraging. In July 1914 the statesmen and diplomatists were, as a whole, more conciliatory, more serious, than the independent journals. A leading authority writes:

If one makes the exception of Isvolsky, the Russian ambassador in Paris, and of Count Berchtold, the Austro-Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs, I think it may be said that the responsible statesmen strove much more conscientiously to preserve peace than did the newspaper editors, with the exception of the Socialists. The ministers were more moderate, more aware of the frightful consequences, and more ready to see the other point of view, and meet it, if possible, than were the newspaper editors and the general public. I suspect that if another war should threaten, the same would be true. That is why I have no sympathy with the advocates of the English League of Democratic Control, or the Americans who urge that the question of war should be submitted to a popular referendum, at least not until the Press of all countries has become more internationally minded than it is at present.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> S. B. Fay, op. cit., in *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, vol. 54, March 1931, *ad fin.*

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In democratic states, such as Switzerland, the United States, Great Britain, the Press is free; and although it is, to some extent, dependent upon information or views given out by Government, it remains independent and critical. Down to quite recent times even despotic states had free journals, though they had official or semi-official journals too. A new development, however, in politics, the Totalitarian state, has appeared since 1922, and has taken over complete control of the Press within its frontiers. In such cases—there are several Totalitarian states in the world—the Press becomes, not exactly a department of state, but an organ of government. In such countries it is no longer a “Fourth Estate”; and its function in diplomacy, as in any other activity, though not unimportant in public affairs, is wholly subordinate. It there scarcely enters into diplomatic history. The articles, for instance, of Signor Gayda, in the *Giornale d’Italia*, which were quoted almost every day by *The Times* during the intensest period of the Italo-Abyssinian controversy, in the summer of 1935, were not generally regarded as anything more than a semi-official version of the Italian Government’s views.

## CHAPTER XVI

### THE STYLE OF DIPLOMACY

DIPLOMACY is conducted either through the spoken or the written word. As diplomatic life and transactions have been going on for centuries, and as diplomatists regard each other as colleagues, their methods of address and communication tend to approximate to each other, to have a common form which is definitely polite. It might be alleged that these politenesses mean nothing; that they are always employed, between friends and strangers alike; and that they are employed not only in good times but in bad, during times of international strain and crisis, and down to the last moment, when peace is rapidly collapsing. This, however, is no valid condemnation of the forms of polite address. Such forms, like the correct manners of people in everyday life, prevent irritation, which is an irrational thing, from going beyond bounds; and they enable peace to be assumed as normal, by diplomatists at any rate, even in the most critical times, and however bad the situation. As long as peace endures, there is a chance of it continuing indefinitely. The diplomatist will go on talking about peace until the very guns begin to boom forth their volleys. He appears almost to ignore the possibility of war and the word is never on his lips, for, particularly in time of international tension, the mention of the challenging word "war" is apt to provoke the catastrophe. This habit of the diplomatist is not a weakness or the result of illusion. It is the steady adherence to an ideal which, the more it is adhered to, the more real it becomes.

Certain of the politenesses of diplomacy are practically

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stereotyped, invariable, but not therefore meaningless; the adoption and maintenance of such forms betoken care on the part of the users and respect for each other. When a French Minister for Foreign Affairs quits office, he addresses to each member of the Diplomatic Corps established in the capital city a letter announcing his retirement, and adding:

Les sentiments de cordialité, de bienveillance que Votre Excellence m'a constamment témoignés, ont rendu l'accomplissement de ma tâche aussi facile qu'agréable. Je désire vivement que nos rapports personnels, en perdant leur caractère officiel, ne soient pas entièrement rompus; et c'est dans cette pensée que je renouvelle à Votre Excellence l'expression de la haute considération avec laquelle je suis, Monsieur, Votre très humble et très obéissant serviteur.<sup>1</sup>

Such letters are, obviously, largely formal. Other notes and dispatches, however, are not formal, but are very seriously considered in the drafting, with every word carefully weighed. Here there is great scope for personality. Governments have often owed their influence, their success or failure in foreign affairs, partly at any rate, to the manner in which a minister has been able to express himself on paper. A study of famous dispatches, a comparison of famous dispatch-writers, offers convincing proof of the importance of style and manner in the conduct of international relations.

A dispatch is the name generally applied to a communication from one Government to another, or from a Government to its diplomatic agents; but while the term is applied to any communication, it is usually taken to refer, not to formal documents, but to such as contain important information or messages. Dispatches from one Government to another are usually sent through the diplomatic agent of the sending

<sup>1</sup> This is the official French form; Genêt, *Traité*, I, pp. 74 n., 97.

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Government, resident at the capital of the other. It may well be that the arguments and conclusions of a dispatch have no immediate result, and yet, owing to their cogency of expression and their reasonable form, have established themselves in the minds of the recipients or of the public and have ultimately prevailed. Equally, bad expression, tactless writing, may prevent reasonable views from being sympathetically considered or duly appreciated. The French dispatch of September 11, 1932, written in answer to the German demand for equality of status in respect of armaments, which amounted to a definite refusal, was, on the whole, well received by the Germans because it was expressed moderately and politely—*höflich*, as the *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* commented. The British reply, which in essence was not more uncompromising than the French, was resented in Germany as being in form a lecture delivered by a lawyer and pedagogue—*schulmeisterisch* was the comment in the German Press.<sup>1</sup>

A well-expressed dispatch which ultimately—years after its delivery—had a great effect was Pitt's, of January 19, 1805. This was drafted, as the result of prolonged conversations between Pitt and Count Woronzov, Russian ambassador in London, and was transmitted to the Russian Government through Lord Granville Leveson-Gower, British ambassador at St. Petersburg. Suggesting the immediate aims which Russia and Great Britain might pursue in common, in an alliance, against Napoleon, Pitt also extended his view to plans for an abiding peace after the cessation of hostilities, and proposed a treaty of all the Powers for creating "a general and comprehensive system of public law in Europe." Certain

<sup>1</sup> See *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, September 18 and 20, 1932; text of the French note in J. W. Wheeler-Bennett, *Documents on International Affairs*, 1932, p. 189.

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specific conditions for this system were proposed. Castlereagh (who had often discussed the project with Pitt) declared later that Pitt's plan was the basis of the Concert of Europe, established in 1815, nine years after Pitt's death. The language and expressions of the dispatch are calm and moderate. It contains no sign of animosity against France; it makes no claim for pre-eminence in the framing of the policy on the part of Great Britain. There is a courteous and, as it were, matter-of-fact assumption throughout that the Russian and British Governments are animated by the same spirit of co-operation and partnership for the public good.

On May 5, 1820, Lord Castlereagh, British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, addressed an important state paper to the Cabinets of St. Petersburg, Vienna, and Berlin, the partners of Great Britain in the Quadruple Alliance. There was a question whether the allies, in the interest of European stability, should interfere to suppress a revolution which had broken out in Spain. Interference in the domestic affairs of a foreign Power was contrary to the policy of Great Britain as a parliamentary state. Lord Castlereagh therefore desired, as Gentz said, to put aside, "once and for all," projects and proposals which could only embarrass and perturb an English ministry. Accordingly, he allowed himself to use language rather stronger and plainer than was usual in his communications with Russia. One passage declared:

In this Alliance, as in all other human Arrangements, nothing is more likely to impair, or even to destroy its real utility, than any attempt to push its duties and its obligations beyond the Sphere which its original conception and understood Principles will warrant. It was an Union for the reconquest and liberation of a great portion of the Continent of Europe from the military domination of France. . . . It never was, however, intended as an

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Union for the Government of the World, or for the Superintendence of the Internal Affairs of other States.

• “Unnecessary intervention” of Great Britain abroad would distract it from urgent tasks nearer home and would have a bad effect upon the British public, especially in the highly democratic manufacturing districts.

It is not merely the temporary inconvenience produced to the British Government by being so committed that is apprehended, but it is the exposing ourselves to have the public Mind soured by the effects of a meddling policy.

The position and character of the Allied States made unavoidable differences in point of view.

We cannot in all matters reason or feel alike; we should lose the Confidence of our respective Nations if we did, and the very affectation of such Impossibility would soon render the Alliance an Object of Odium, and Distrust, whereas, if we keep it within its *common-sense* limits, the Representative Governments, and those which are more purely Monarchical, may well each find a common Interest.

The doctrine of the lawfulness of one state intervening by force in the internal affairs of another could not be adopted by Great Britain:

No Country having a Representative System of Government could act upon it—and the sooner such a Doctrine shall be distinctly abjured as forming in any Degree the Basis of our Alliance, the better. . . .

We shall be found in our Place when actual danger menaces the System of Europe; but this country cannot and will not act upon abstract and speculative Principles of Prevention.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The State Paper of May 5, 1820, is reproduced in full in *The Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy*, II, pp. 623–33.

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Gentz, who was the leading permanent official of the Austrian Foreign Office under Metternich, said that the language of this state paper was "less ambiguous, less reserved, less respectful" than was usual in Castlereagh's communications with Russia.<sup>1</sup> There are occasions when absolutely plain speaking is essential; no harm will be done, if the language is perfectly courteous, and if any hint or tone of superiority is avoided.

Metternich was a celebrated composer of dispatches (always in French), putting his point of view forward with great skill, in language which was always correct, easy, courteous. Gentz, who was at the Austrian Foreign Office from 1809 to 1831, was one of the most finished diplomatic writers in Europe, and had much to do with the composition of Metternich's dispatches during that time. After Gentz's death, Metternich developed an even more urbane style. With increasing years, the love of writing grew upon him; and instead of making decisions on questions which were urgently calling for solution, he preferred to write long dispatches or memoranda about them. His own officials and foreign Governments began to feel, towards the end of his period, that he was growing a little tedious. Nevertheless, there is much that was admirable in the career of this old diplomatist, with his belief in "Europe," his reliance upon the powers of human reason and the force of lucid argument, and the unfailing urbanity of his communications. Metternich regarded the dispatches which he sent to foreign Governments as his means of defending himself before the public opinion of Europe. British and French ministers, he said, had their parliaments in which they could stand up and expound their policy; he had no *forum* in which to make speeches, only his pen.

The Russian Foreign Office was a distinguished school for

<sup>1</sup> Gentz, *Depêches aux Hospodars de Wallachie*, II, pp. 56-7.

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diplomatists from the time when, after the Moscow Expedition, the Tsar Alexander put aside merely "Russian" motives of policy, and stepped forth into "Europe." Nesselrode, the Russian Foreign Minister from 1816 to 1856 (and Chancellor from 1844 to 1862), was a great master; among others whom he trained were Alexander Stourdza, a Rumanian, the writer of the famous *Denkschrift* or Memorandum on the state of Europe which convinced the statesmen at the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1818 about the danger of revolution; Brunnow, a Saxon, ambassador at London from 1840 to 1854, and from 1858 to 1874, a sagacious negotiator and a master of forcible, lucid diplomatic writing; and Gortchakoff, the last Russian Chancellor, who was universally regarded as meriting the prize for elegance in diplomatic writing, if not for perfect sincerity. Among his most celebrated dispatches (composed in French), which were sent round the European Cabinets, was one some years after the Peace of Paris of 1856; in this he declared that Russia, in retirement after the Crimean War, was not sulking but only recuperating; another, of October 1870, repudiated the Black Sea clauses of the Treaty of Paris; in another, of May 1875, in which he irretrievably offended Bismarck by declaring that he (Gortchakoff) had preserved peace between Germany and France.<sup>1</sup> The eminence, it might be said the pre-eminence, of Russian diplomacy in the middle nineteenth century was due to three things. Firstly, the immense physical strength which Russia possessed, or was believed to possess, particularly under Nicholas I; secondly, the unwearying zeal with which Russian statesmen travelled in Europe, visiting their colleagues, the

<sup>1</sup> Dispatch (telegram) of May 10, 1875, in P. Matter, *Bismarck* (1908), III, p. 388. The Convention of 1856, respecting the Black Sea, was denounced by circular letter of October 31, 1870; Hertslet, *Map of Europe by Treaty*, III, No. 429.

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statesmen of other Powers, at the watering-places and capital cities; and thirdly, the elegance and perspicuity of their diplomatic correspondence. This last feature was the product of a more leisurely age than ours. Gortchakoff, especially as he had no parliamentary duties, enjoyed long periods of repose when he could plan his circular notes and dispatches, their form of expression and time of delivery. According to his own account, given to Sir Robert Morier, he conceived his "Black Sea" circular in the early months of the Franco-German War, because the advent of this struggle reduced the amount of Foreign Office business for the time being, and Gortchakoff found himself with "nothing to do." The great writers of dispatches, Metternich, Canning, Clarendon, Gortchakoff, and Curzon (who wrote with a majestic and convincing amplitude), were either men of considerable leisure or of enormous industry. Except Curzon, they wrote only for the weekly or fortnightly courier, and had therefore no temptation to fall into the style of the telegraph form or cablegram.

Gortchakoff's polished, egotistical, clear, rather insincere dispatches increased his own reputation more than that of his country. They are in great contrast to the dispatches of a contemporary, the United States Secretary of State, James G. Blaine. This man was a hero to the American public of his day, and bore the somewhat incongruous popular *sobriquet* of the "plumed knight," but he is now regarded as having been a man of rather commonplace mind and of commonplace political morality. The American nation, after the anguish and uncertainties of the Civil War, was beginning to be conscious again of its weight and power; and a kind of revival of old-time animosity towards Great Britain seemed to be fashionable. Mr. Blaine easily fell into line with this tendency, revived an old dispute with Great Britain over the Clayton-Bulwer treaty

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of 1850, and lapsed into a direct assertion that the United States Government would be justified, in case of military necessity, in simply breaking the treaty obligation. The Clayton-Bulwer treaty, in which Great Britain and the United States were the contracting parties, stipulated that any canal which might be constructed across the Isthmus of Panama should be neutral. Blaine, who was Secretary of State in 1881, and was championing a popular demand for suppression of the treaty, asserted in a dispatch to the British Government:

The Government of the United States would feel that it had been unfaithful to its duty, and neglectful towards its own citizens, if it permitted itself to be bound by a Treaty which gave the same right through the Canal to a warship, bent on an errand of destruction, that is reserved to its own navy sailing for the defence of our coast, and the protection of the lives of our people.

This brutal paragraph is an instance of bad drafting and of loose thinking. It is an example of the way in which a political paper should not be written, because it was shocking to the moral and political sense of all who should read it; because it did not accurately represent the view of the United States Government; and because it exposed the writer and his Government to the certainty of a crushing reply. Lord Granville, British Secretary of State, to whom Mr. Blaine's paper was addressed, was a very well-trained writer of dispatches and a thoroughly sensible, honourable, and courteous man. His reply took up Mr. Blaine's argument, point by point, and dealt with it at length, patiently and temporately. He also declared, in regard to the question: "The principles upon which the whole argument of the dispatch is founded are, as far as I am aware, novel in international law."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For the Blaine-Granville Correspondence, see *Parliamentary Papers*, 1882, LXXX, pp. 61-73.

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Mr. Blaine was saved from having to engage much longer in this unequal contest, for in March 1882 he went out of office. His successor at the State Department, Frederick T. Frelinghuysen, adopted a more orthodox attitude. Ultimately, the Clayton-Bulwer treaty was annulled by agreement between the British and United States Governments and was superseded by another, but not until the opening of the twentieth century.

In 1890 Mr. Blaine was back at the State Department, and was engaged in another controversy with the British Foreign Office, over which this time Lord Salisbury presided. Blaine's contention was that the United States Government, the possessor of all the formerly Russian rights over Alaska and Alaskan waters, could close the Behring Sea (or Sea of Kamchatka) to foreign Powers. The Pacific Ocean had been declared open by a Russo-British treaty of 1824 to the contracting parties; and the Russian claims had been the subject of correspondence between George Canning and John Quincy Adams, the British and American Secretaries of State at that time. The term "Pacific Ocean," Mr. Blaine contended, necessarily excluded from its meaning the Sea of Kamchatka, which thus could be closed by Russia or by her successor, the United States. Mr. Blaine wrote to the British Foreign Office, adding evidence from the witness of Captain Cook and others, to prove that the Sea of Kamchatka was not part of the Pacific Ocean, adding:

Is it possible that with this great cloud of witnesses before the eyes of Mr. Adams and Mr. George Canning, attesting the existence of the Sea of Kamchatka, they would simply include it in the phrase, "Pacific Ocean," and make no allusion to it whatever as a separate sea, when it was known by almost every educated man in Europe and America to be so designated numberless

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times? . . . It is impossible that in the Anglo-Russian Treaty, Count Nesselrode, Mr. Stratford Canning, and M. Poletica, could have taken sixteen lines to recite the titles and honours they had received from their respective sovereigns, and not even suggest the insertion of one line, or even word, to secure as valuable a grant to England as the full freedom of Behring's sea.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Blaine's argument and style of writing, though there was a certain superficial brilliance about them, were not convincing from the point of view either of international law or diplomacy. Lord Salisbury took a grave view of the situation, and sent four ships of the Royal Navy to protect the Canadian sealing-ships in the Behring Sea. But he answered Mr. Blaine's contention patiently and courteously; and he privately admitted in a letter to the British ambassador at Washington that the United States Government had a "moral basis" for their claim to regulate the seal-fishing.<sup>2</sup> The point at issue was ultimately referred to arbitration and was settled in 1893 in favour of the British contention.

It will be noticed that Mr. Blaine, in his dispatch, had employed the method of irony, always a mistake in diplomacy; for irony expresses an assumption of superiority on the part of the writer, and it cannot fail to offend the recipient. It is obviously a serious fault in a diplomatist, who is trying to persuade another party to agree with him, if he offends that party's personal feelings. A successor of Mr. Blaine at the State Department, Mr. Olney, erred through over-directness of expression, and through introducing extraneous matter into a dispatch. This was in a communication, which became very celebrated, to the British Government, dated July 20, 1895. There was an ancient boundary dispute between Great Britain

<sup>1</sup> *Parliamentary Papers*, 1890-1, XCVII, p. 247.

<sup>2</sup> Lady G. Cecil, *Life of Robert, First Marquis of Salisbury*, IV, p. 350.

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and the Republic of Venezuela concerning the boundary of British Guiana. The United States Government was urgent that the dispute should be settled. Mr. Olney wrote to the American ambassador in London (Mr. Bayard) for communication to the British Government that all the considerations in the question "call for a definite decision upon the point whether Great Britain will consent or will decline to submit the Venezuelan Boundary Question in its entirety to impartial arbitration." In the same dispatch Mr. Olney (obviously with the connection of Great Britain and Canada in view) wrote: "That distance and three thousand miles of intervening ocean make any permanent political union between any European and any American State unnatural and inexpedient, will hardly be denied." This statement was not merely tactless, it was irrelevant to the question in dispute. Another statement was not irrelevant but, whether true or not, was certainly tactless, inasmuch as it was bound needlessly to offend all the Central and South American states. Mr. Olney wrote: "To-day the United States is practically sovereign on this continent, and its fiat is law upon the subjects to which it confines its interposition."

Lord Salisbury's answer was a model of firm and courteous rejoinder; the only criticism that could validly be alleged against it was that he took too long (four months) in framing his answer. For although he might feel that the Government of the United States had no right insistently to "call for a definite decision" (Mr. Olney explained this as meaning that Great Britain and Venezuela should go to arbitration), yet it had done so; a delay of four months in answering a Great Power's "call" could not be considered courteous or likely to allay irritation. Apart from this question of delay, Lord Salisbury's reply, to the effect that the whole affair was between Great

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Britain and Venezuela, and was their business only, was perhaps as courteously expressed as Mr. Olney's declarations had been crudely expressed. Lord Salisbury wrote (November 26, 1895):

Whether in any particular case it [arbitration] is a suitable method of procedure is generally a delicate and difficult question. The only parties who are competent to decide that question are the two parties whose rival contentions are in issue. The claim of a third nation, which is unaffected by the controversy, to impose this procedure on either of the two others, cannot be reasonably justified, and has no foundation in the law of nations.

With regard to the statement of Mr. Olney referring to European Powers and their American colonies and to the Monroe Doctrine, Lord Salisbury wrote:

President Monroe disclaims any such inference from his doctrine; but in this, as in other respects, Mr. Olney develops it. He lays down that the inexpedient and unnatural character of the union between a European and an American State is so obvious "that it will hardly be denied." Her Majesty's Government are prepared emphatically to deny it on behalf of both the British and American peoples who are subject to her Crown. They maintain that the union between Great Britain and her territories in the Western Hemisphere is both natural and expedient.

The result of all this bungling (for Mr. Olney's dispatch bungled in so far as it was tactlessly expressed and contained irrelevances, and Lord Salisbury's in so far as it was late) was that the Governments of Great Britain and the United States faced each other in a political *impasse*; each had taken up a definite position from which it could not recede. To bring about such a result is the negation of diplomacy; for diplomacy

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exists just in order to avoid situations from which there is no exit except force. Two Great Powers, like the British Empire and the United States, could not recede from their written declaration to each other, more especially as President Cleveland answered Lord Salisbury's dispatch of November 26th with a bellicose message of his own to Congress on December 17th. War was only averted because public opinion both in Great Britain and the United States was absolutely against it, and because neither Government was sufficiently afraid of the other to feel that it must act swiftly, mobilize, and strike first.

The diplomatic style of the Imperial German Foreign Office had some characteristics of its own. Bismarck's writing, like everything else which he did, was vigorous, picturesque, and never discourteous. His followers, inevitably, modelled their writing on his, with the inevitable result that, lacking his genius for the vigorous and picturesque, they fell into a rut of commonplace phraseology. The dispatches of Holstein, Marschall, and even Kiderlen (who had a good deal of vigour and picturesqueness), have very frequently metaphorical phrases like: "we do not mean to pick the chestnuts out of the fire" for such and such a Power; or "England means to be in the position of *tertius gaudens*"; or "this would be to erect a European *Areopagus*." This habitual employment of stereotyped phrases served the writers in place of independent thought on the subject in question, and confirmed them in their prepossessions. No other Great Power's Foreign Office was under the domination of phrases in the way in which the German was. Bethmann-Hollweg's *Just for a scrap of paper* was the slipping out of one such cant phrase, and did not really represent his own judgment, if only he had been used to analysing his terms and framing them independently. Lack of thought,

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the easy acquiescence in the use of glib phrases, brought off a terrible nemesis.

• French dispatches are written with admirable clearness and courtesy, old-established forms being freely used, but only for the formal parts, such as openings, conclusions, acknowledgments of receipt, expressions of cordiality, and such. These forms are, of course, of importance in themselves, according as they are employed at the right place in the dispatch, and in conjunction with other remarks. A fair example of a French dispatch of a more or less formal kind is:

ROME, le 25 *décembre*, 1912.

MONSIEUR LE MINISTRE,

J'ai l'honneur de notifier à Votre Excellence, d'ordre de mon Gouvernement, le traité de protectorat franco-marocain qui a été signé à Fez le 30 mars 1912, dont le texte est ci-annexé.

Le Gouvernement de la République serait heureux que le Gouvernement du Roi voulut bien donner son adhésion à cet acte, et je me plaît à espérer que Votre Excellence sera en mesure de me faire le plus tôt possible une communication en ce sens.

Veuillez agréer,

CAMILLE BARRÈRE.

Occasionally the writer of a French diplomatic note succumbs to the temptation of irony: M. Poincaré was apt to do this. In general, however, the style of French dispatches is straightforward and concrete.

In time of revolution, changes may occur in a Foreign Office and result in diplomatic lapses. The Russian Revolution of 1917 transformed the Petrograd Foreign Office into the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs. Some of the officials of the old Foreign Office were retained; new men, of the Soviet party, were from time to time appointed. In 1923

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there took place the curious correspondence between the Russian and British foreign departments, beginning with a British note about the condemnation of Monseigneur Butkevitch.<sup>1</sup> The insolent notes signed by M. Weinstein are unique in diplomatic history and could only be the work of officials who had broken completely with all precedent, and who had never received any training. The Soviet Commissariat, however, soon recovered its balance, abandoned the Weinstein method of writing abuse, and adopted a style somewhat more austere than the style of Tsarist diplomacy, but, as a rule, correct and dignified.

Exchanges of notes between Governments which were rather sharply divided from each other on matters of high policy have been fairly common since the close of the World War. The correspondence between Great Britain and France, actually between Lord Curzon and M. Poincaré, in 1923, concerning the French occupation of the Ruhr, is a striking instance of controversy pushed nearly to the verge of complete estrangement. On the one side was the full, elaborate, convincing language of Lord Curzon, magnificent, impressive, rather too pontifical; on the other hand, the immovable M. Poincaré, speaking in language of darting phrases and ironical expressions, which could have been inspired only by personal irritation. Fortunately, the MacDonald-Herriot régime in the following year re-established the old, suaver method of conducting international correspondence. On the whole, it would appear that the diplomatic style of Ministries of Foreign Affairs has somewhat deteriorated since the World War; a certain impatience of form; a tendency to rely upon plain statements; a tendency to assume infallibility or at any rate a complete and almost exclusive sense of rectitude, is apparent

<sup>1</sup> See above, pp. 208-9.

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in the notes of certain states. On the whole, the standard of politeness in diplomatic language appears to be best maintained in the Foreign Offices which retain the greatest attachment to traditional forms, and where the permanent officials have kept in their hands almost exclusively the task of drafting the letters and dispatches. Although it is the spirit which quickeneth and which in the long run governs the fortunes of mankind, the rules of the "protocol" can never be unimportant in the relations of states; for Governments, which after all are only composed of individuals, are quite as sensitive as other people to the manner in which they are approached.

## CHAPTER XVII

### DIPLOMACY AND DEMOCRACY

THE factor which made the old diplomacy by itself insufficient for its task after the War was the increase of democracy. Diplomatists of the old school, like Prince Bülow and Jules Cambon, who lived over into the post-War period, have a little regretfully looked back to the old days. Then, in the ~~stillness~~ and seclusion of their Cabinets, the Foreign Ministers and ambassadors of separate states thoroughly understood each other, and could make concessions to each other, without taking much account of the "reaction" of public opinion. "Like every great historical movement, the awakening of national sentiment had its dark as well as its bright aspects. The relations between European states were made more difficult. Despite their self-seeking, their frivolity and their intrigues, it was easier to arrive at compromises and understandings between Cabinets than between peoples who were heated, passionate, and often blind."<sup>1</sup> Since the War, democracy in two ways greatly interferes with diplomatic work. In the first place, parliaments or electorates have established a claim to ratify or to refuse to ratify the acts of diplomatists; and secondly, the increase of democracy has resulted in a public opinion as expressed in journals, memorials, and many other ways, which is headstrong and insistent, and to some extent guides, accelerates, retards, and in general renders uneven the course of negotiations. The essential fact about the diplomatist still is that he represents his sovereign. "It is the incidence of sovereignty which has shifted—from the monarch to the people."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bülow, *Memoirs*, IV, p. 51, cf. J. Cambon, *Le Diplomate* (1926), p. 32.

<sup>2</sup> See H. Nicolson, *Peacemaking, 1919* (1933), p. 4.

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Many times since the War parliaments or electorates have exercised their right of passing judgment decisively on their diplomatic representatives' acts. The peace treaties of 1919 were negotiated under very severe difficulties on account of the intransigent state of opinion in the Home legislatures. The General Election of 1919, writes Mr. Nicolson, "returned to Westminster the most unintelligent body of public-school boys which ever the Mother of Parliaments has known."<sup>1</sup> The peace treaties of 1919 were submitted to the legislatures of the signatory states, were approved with difficulty by some, and were rejected by others. Only after a violent struggle was a majority obtained in the Weimar Assembly for the Treaty of Versailles, which in fact was absolutely inescapable. The United States Senate rejected the Treaty of Versailles. The Three-Power Guarantee Pact (Great Britain, France, the United States) which President Wilson signed on June 28, 1919, was not even submitted to the Senate, as rejection was certain. The Turkish National Assembly at Angora refused to have anything to do with the Peace Treaty of Sèvres. The "Young Plan" or Hague Agreements on Reparations were submitted to a plebiscite of the German people and received overwhelming approval. It is obvious that the influence of legislators is to be judged not merely by the number of treaties which they reject or modify but by the effect which possible ultimate rejection or modification has upon the negotiations while still in the hands of the diplomatists. The Senate of the United States alone had in the century and a quarter before the World War the right of approving of treaties; since the War most legislatures have arrogated such a right to themselves; and the organs of the Press have placed a numbing hand on the hands of the diplomatists. The memorial in favour of a

<sup>1</sup> See H. Nicolson, *Peacemaking, 1919* (1933), p. 19.

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huge war indemnity, sent by a massed body of Members of Parliament (themselves largely compelled by a Press campaign) to Mr. Lloyd George during the peace negotiations of 1919 at Paris, is a deplorable instance of the interference of unqualified persons in diplomacy. Such interferences, common now, were almost unknown before the War, although the memorial of one hundred members of the British Parliament to the Greek Government in 1896 is an instance; this memorial helped to spur Greece into a disastrous war. Unfortunately, though perhaps inevitably owing to the conditions of human nature, memorials urging to extreme courses are far more likely to be effective than memorials counselling moderation. "Moderation" has no striking appeal; it scarcely can be expressed in dramatic, sensational language; it must studiously avoid exciting passion. For these reasons public memorials in the interest of moderation addressed to statesmen and diplomatists have little dynamic force behind them compared with the driving-power of appeals, however disguised, to prejudice, greed, race-consciousness, revenge. The work of the Peace Conference of Paris in 1919 was interrupted and jeopardized by the abrupt withdrawal of the Italians on April 24th. The Italian delegation was led by a statesman of moderate view and conciliatory character (Signor Orlando); but it had to be withdrawn (luckily only for a fortnight) on account of the insistent expression of indignation of the Italian Parliament and Press with the proposed peace terms. The history of the disarmament conferences of the fifteen years after the War, and particularly of the Geneva Conference of 1932–5, provide outstanding examples of the effect of democracy in retarding or failing to stimulate the action of diplomatists. The widely signed petitions in favour of disarmament from numerous national and international associations presented at the opening of the Conference had

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less effect than the steady drag of uninformed opinion in every country, like a dead hand on the ministers who throughout the spring and summer made their timid advances and retreats at Geneva.

The establishing of fully-grown democracy on the world stage in the post-War period complicated the work of diplomats in other ways than merely by exercising control of their decisions. Democracy naturally prefers to be represented at great negotiations by its chosen parliamentary minister or ministers rather than by career-diplomatists about whom it knows no more than it does of other civil servants. The parliamentary minister, too, has a majority in the home legislature and therefore there is a probability or possibility that the conventions which he negotiates will be ratified. On the other hand he may lose his majority owing to circumstances that may be wholly unconnected with diplomacy. On the eve of the Disarmament Conference of 1932 the French Premier, M. Laval, fell before a vote in the Chamber of Deputies on a franchise reform bill. In April, after the Conference had been opened, a German presidential election and a Prussian general election made the position of the German Chancellor, Dr. Brüning, uncertain, and necessitated his absence from time to time from Geneva. In June the French Chamber of Deputies came to the legal term of its existence and a general election occurred, on which the fate of M. Tardieu and his policy depended. *The Times'* correspondent at Geneva wrote with gentle pessimism:

There is to-day, even among some of the most influential delegates, a dissatisfaction at the manner in which discussions of great importance are put off from day to day. It is unfortunate that elections in two great states should have come at a time when important principles should have been settled, as a number

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of days have been lost which might have been very usefully employed. But if the Conference could settle down to business, it is still in a good position to obtain valuable results.<sup>1</sup>

In 1932, a year of depression and agitation, a presidential election was imminent in the United States. The Geneva Disarmament Conference was proceeding, the United States being present at the Conference and deeply interested in it. Nevertheless, when the German Government, in September, placed before the French Government a demand for "equality of status" in respect of national armaments, a demand which obviously and vitally concerned the whole armament question, the President of the United States hastened to announce "disinterestedness" in the German claim. The electoral campaign was going forward in the United States, and Mr. Hoover was a candidate for nomination to a second term of office. The Washington correspondent of *The Times* wrote:

It is learned that President Hoover's recent statement about the German arms claim (in which he declared that the question was "solely European") was made on the advice of Mr. Brown, the Postmaster-General, for purely domestic reasons.

Mr. Brown, who is Mr. Hoover's chief political mentor, informed him that the impression had been given by the State Department that Germany should respect the armament sections of the Versailles Treaty, and that this was likely to lose him thousands of votes in the Presidential election in Wisconsin and other North-Western States where the German vote is strong. Mr. Brown urged that a statement be made to offset this impression, and it was this, it is believed, rather than any desire to influence Europe, which prompted the President's statement.<sup>2</sup>

The diplomats of the old school did not, do not, greatly like democracy. They would admit and loyally hold that they

<sup>1</sup> *The Times*, September 23, 1932.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

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must take account of the sentiment of their peoples, the deep-seated, invariable sentiment which is in the soul of every people. They resent, however, men of realism as they are, having their plans warped, their wholesome work misdirected, by a public, passionate and capricious, the dupe of ignorance and demagogery. A prudent foreign policy requires long views and a steady purpose. Policy, naturally, should be amended from time to time, and should be adapted to circumstances. It may even, on mature deliberation, be reversed, as when Austria in 1756 (by the "Diplomatic Revolution") abandoned her age-long opposition to France; or when Bismarck, in 1871, made an alliance with Austria, after Prussia had been thwarting Austria for over a hundred years; or when Great Britain made the famous *entente cordiale* with France in 1830 and again in 1904. There was, however, nothing capricious in these maturely reasoned reversals of policy on the part of the old diplomatists. Theirs was always a policy of long view, and it was either based on tradition or it soon developed into a tradition. The Foreign Office and diplomatic corps of each state preserved its traditions of policy, studied them, applied them, adapted them. A parliamentary ministry, on the other hand, a popular legislature, a parliamentary committee on foreign affairs, may be inexperienced, prejudiced, capricious, even ignorant. Writing in the year 1900, one of the most learned students of diplomacy (Pradier-Fodéré), declared: "The great European monarchies, by reason of the perpetuity of their system, and the generally long career of their statesmen, have in this respect an incontestable advantage over stormy, popular Governments."<sup>1</sup> There are now no "Great European Monarchies" in the sense in which the phrase was then used.

A steadily pursued, traditional policy, is not likely to produce

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war because other Governments come to know this policy and to take it into their calculations; but policy dependent on a changing legislature is liable to breed fear and uncertainty abroad, and so to lead to war crises. "It is a profound and dangerous illusion to believe that war is always made in the Cabinets of statesmen, and that more and more direct participation of the crowd in foreign policy will always be a guarantee of peace. Alas! crowds have their psychology, singularly unforeseeable and dangerous, their fits of anger, their caprices, their anxieties, their summary and brutal enquiries."<sup>1</sup> "Policy, even international policy, has now come forth from the Cabinets of statesmen. The man in the street plays a part in it; he will bring to it his passions, his instincts, his prejudices, his ignorance; and this will not render easy the task of men who will endeavour to appeal to reason in order to avoid catastrophes." Sometimes, perhaps, the man in the street shows more wisdom than the Executive or Legislature. It was public opinion outside the Legislature which brought about the intervention of Italy in the World War. "The impression remained . . . that the nation, or certain sections of it, had shown an intelligence and a determination in promoting the honour and welfare of Italy which the Chamber and Senate did not possess. At the time few were impressed, and those not deeply, by this failure in the respect due to the constitutional representatives of the nation; while the great steps that had been taken, and the whirlwind of war which followed, soon caused it to be forgotten. But they could not alter the fact that it had happened."<sup>2</sup>

The appeasement of French and German animosities and fears was (and is) one of the vital needs of European politics;

<sup>1</sup> H. Hauser, *Histoire diplomatique de l'Europe* (1929), I, p. 14.

<sup>2</sup> B. Croce, *History of Italy, 1871-1915* (trans. July 1929), p. 287.

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yet appeasement seemed impossible after 1871 without a concession on one side or the other which public opinion would not tolerate. Bülow relates how he and the Russian statesman, Witte, discussed this in the secluded environment, not indeed of the Cabinet, but of a famous restaurant:

I invited him to dine with me at Borchardt's, the old and famous Berlin restaurant, and there, from eight o'clock till after midnight, we thrashed out all the questions that concerned us. Witte's ideal was still a German-Russian-French alliance against the English. He tried to convince me that if we restored Lorraine to France a grouping of this kind would not be impossible. He added that in such a case the French would quite possibly be willing to dismantle the fortifications of Metz. I replied that it would be almost impossible for any German Chancellor, any Emperor even—no matter who—to surrender Metz, which had cost so much German blood and which had now been ours for a generation. I proceeded to ask him point-blank if really he was so sure that the French, even should Metz be restored to them, would frankly and sincerely renounce all claims to Strasbourg. Witte, who, like all serious statesmen, despised petty evasions and half-truths, replied after a moment's reflection: "*Non! Ils déposeront dès le lendemain des couronnes aux pieds de la statue de Strasbourg sur la place de la Concorde, en criant: Et Strasbourg? Et Strasbourg?*"<sup>1</sup>

The French ambassador at Berlin on August 3, 1914, watched the crowd on the Pariser Platz singing patriotic songs and hurling insults against France. They went on and broke the windows of the British Embassy. The authorities regretted these outbursts, but could not stop them: "the best obeyed Government that ever existed found itself impotent to control popular passion." This was an exceptional time of war-fever; but at all periods, even the most peaceful, there have broken

<sup>1</sup> Bülow, *Memoirs*, II, p. 163.

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out the poisonous passions produced by ignorance and greed. "Unfortunately, certain people like hating; it supplies them with a principle of energy. It is, therefore, necessary to look elsewhere than in popular sentiment for the force which will prevent nations from fighting each other."<sup>1</sup> Vain hope! To look for a principle of peace outside democracy is to give up the struggle; for democracy has arrived and will not give way. Even dictators have to take account of their public opinion. Diplomacy, continuing its fruitful task, must patiently work through democracy.

It was the possession of this ability to work, patiently, consistently, and decisively, amid the conflicting and incalculable conditions of democratic politics, which made Stresemann and Briand the greatest of post-War diplomats. The idea of the Pact of Locarno (involving the definite, voluntary renunciation of Alsace-Lorraine by Germany) was conceived in a time of the most inflamed nationalism and irritation, during the frightful episode of "the Ruhr." Lord D'Abernon, who was British representative at Berlin in this period, and who co-operated intimately with Stresemann in promoting the idea of the Pact, has described the minute precautions necessary in order to maintain secrecy in the negotiation. Any German statesman who, while the Ruhr question was inflaming the public, was known to have proposed such a thing, was practically certain to be murdered.<sup>2</sup> Some wind of the matter got about, and there were plots against Stresemann's life. Even when the prolonged negotiations were brought to a successful conclusion and the Pact was being signed, Stresemann is said to have remarked to Briand that it was not exactly a life-insurance policy that they were completing. The policy

<sup>1</sup> Cambon, *Le Diplomate*, pp. 102-3.

<sup>2</sup> D'Abernon, *An Ambassador of Peace* (1930), III, pp. 210, 213.

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of "appeasement and fulfilment" (which meant fulfilment of the Reparations obligations) could never be popular in Germany, and Stresemann was never really sure of a majority in the Reichstag. Nor was Briand in a much better situation. He had to take account of the very sensitive, and very powerful, opinion of the French bourgeoisie and the Paris Press, and this sometimes completely spoiled his most hopeful plans; for instance, when it brought about his sudden withdrawal from the Cannes Conference in 1922, because he played an intimate game of golf with Mr. Lloyd George. In addition to French opinion, he had to take account of German opinion, which one occasion led the German Government to deal him a mortal blow—the 1929 agreement between Germany and Austria for an Anschluss or Customs union. A Foreign Minister in these days who is unswervingly devoted to the cause of peace, and whose only aim is the public good, requires an unusual combination of qualities; for, in addition to the calls which diplomacy at all times has made upon mind and character, he requires to possess in an unusual degree the qualities of generosity, patience, courage, humour, and optimism—the ability to accept frequent, perhaps continual, defeat at the hands of the people whom he is trying to save and whom he will go on trying to save as long as there is an ounce of strength remaining in him.

The justification of Democracy's claim to control foreign policy lies in the tragic muddle and failure which statesmen made of the world through the secrecy of their policies before the World War. That Europe, in spite of heavy armaments, international competition, nationalism, and irredentism, was kept at peace from 1871 to 1914 is a remarkable fact. As, however, in the same period the German, Austrian, Italian, Russian, and (in effect) the British Governments had made

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secret treaties or understandings practically bin~~ding~~ing their peoples to go to war in the event of certain not unlikely circumstances, these Governments had made war almost inevitable some time or other. Human skill, adroitness, and *sang-froid* could not be counted on to last through every recurrent crisis, in every European state at the same time. The nerve of some statesmen or statesman would break down; a threatening or hostile act would occur; and then, under the *casus foederis*, the legal or moral obligations of alliance, the helpless peoples would be brought into the agony of carnage and mutual destruction. Nothing can excuse the statesmen for their secret binding of peoples for war in the event of something which, in the complexities of international life and of human nature, was bound to happen some time or other.

Diplomacy can, however, only work with any degree of efficiency under democracy if the democracy can rid itself of certain defects which have been displayed from time to time. These are firstly, frequent changes of *personnel*, that is, of the Minister of Foreign Affairs; secondly, inexperience in the chosen minister; and thirdly, arbitrary interference with the policy or decisions of the minister or Government.

The first danger, frequent changes of Foreign Minister, has not afflicted Great Britain where on the whole a two-party system of politics has prevailed; a Cabinet which has a majority of the members of the House of Commons behind it is reasonably assured of being in office for four or five years. The United States Secretary of State is appointed by the President, whose term of office is fixed by the Constitution for four years. On the Continent of Europe, in countries where there is parliamentary government, the "group system" prevails. Cabinets made out of shifting combinations of groups are naturally somewhat unstable. The Third French Republic has

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had many more Prime Ministers and many more Foreign Ministers than Great Britain has in the same period. Lord Salisbury was at the Foreign Office altogether for eleven and a half years. It is possible, however, under the Group System for a Foreign Minister to acquire such a reputation and experience as to become almost indispensable, so that he or his group may be found in successive combinations. Thus, Dr. Stremann was German Foreign Minister in various Governments from 1923 to 1929. M. Briand was Foreign Minister of France in a succession of numerous Cabinets and for most of the period 1920-32. Dr. Benes of Czechoslovakia was practically Permanent Foreign Minister for the first sixteen years of the revived state. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is obviously in a different category from other Departments of State, and many advantages accrue if a democracy can adapt itself to a longer tenure of this office.

Inexperience in the Minister of Foreign Affairs is less common than frequent changes of tenure. The study of foreign affairs is interesting; the office enjoys high *prestige*; and it offers opportunities for public work on a world scale which appeals to every man of energy and ideals. There are in civilized states always men qualified for the office, though naturally they vary in experience and ability.

Liability to interference on the part of the democracy with the policy of the Foreign Minister and of his Government is a danger to which all ministers are exposed, and to which, in the interest of reasonable democratic control, they ought to be exposed. Ultimate control by parliament or electorate must always be there, in the background; but frequent exercise of this control would have disastrous effects upon the conduct of foreign affairs. Article 2, Section 2, of the Constitution of the United States, which makes the treaty-enacting power of the

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President dependent on the approval of two-thirds of the Senators present, has made the conduct of foreign affairs difficult. It is not simply that the Senate kills or vitally alters treaties which are being negotiated; but also many desirable negotiations are taken up only to be dropped, or are not taken up at all, because it is believed that the approval of two-thirds of the Senate would not be obtained.

The Foreign Minister, however, must not be too diffident in the face of his democracy. There will be little progress in international affairs, unless he is prepared to take the lead, and to make decisions even in advance of what public opinion is agreed upon (if, indeed, public opinion is ever definitely agreed on anything). A statesmanlike decision has at least a good chance of being approved by Parliament and public opinion. The constant fear on the part of Prime Ministers or Foreign Ministers concerning the effect of their actions upon their parties and legislatures ruins policy. The letters exchanged (January 1924) between Mr. MacDonald and M. Poincaré in the early days of their first Prime Ministry strike a fair balance between the calls of European leadership and the demands of their "national" publics.

### MR. MACDONALD TO M. POINCARÉ

MY DEAR PREMIER,

Our two countries have gone through such trying times side by side and have made such sacrifices together for a common cause, that on coming into office I address you a personal note not only to inform you of the change, but to send you my greetings and good wishes. I grieve to find so many unsettled points causing us trouble and concern, and I assure you it will be my daily endeavour to help to settle them to our mutual benefit. You have your public opinion and I have mine; you have your national

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interests to conserve and protect and I have mine. Sometimes<sup>at</sup> at first they may be in conflict but I am sure, by the strenuous action of good will, these conflicts can be settled and policies devised in the pursuit of which France and Great Britain can remain in hearty co-operation. We can be frank without being hostile, and defend our countries' interests without being at enmity. Thus, the Entente will be much more than a nominal thing, and France and Great Britain can advance together to establish peace and security in Europe.

*January 26, 1924.*

### M. POINCARÉ TO MR. MACDONALD

MY DEAR PRIME MINISTER,

I am much touched by your kind letter, which you have been good enough to write me to inform me yourself that you have entered on your high functions and to send me your personal good wishes.

I hope with all my heart that your efforts for the welfare of your country will be crowned with success. The bonds which unite it to my own have been knit together, as you recall, in times of common trial and sacrifice. You may be sure that the memory of these times is ever present to my mind as it is to yours.

I also deeply regret that several questions of importance to our two countries have not yet been settled. Like you, I will do my utmost to solve them by friendly agreement and to our mutual advantage.

If we have to take into account public opinion, in our respective countries, if we have both to safeguard our national interests, I am confident that in applying, each in his own sphere, the vigorous action and the good-will of which you speak, to the settlement of problems arising between us, we shall solve them in such a manner as to maintain between Great Britain and France the policy of co-operation essential to our two countries and to the tranquility of the world.

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My own frankness shall be no less than yours, and if in the defence of French interests, I show the same fervour as you in defence of British interests, you may be sure that nothing will ever change the cordiality of my deep-rooted feelings. It is impossible that, animated as we both are by such sentiments, we should fail to make the Entente effective and fruitful of the results which it can, and ought to, bear in order that Europe as a whole should find once more peace, security, and freedom to work.

Statesmen and politicians must lead and must make decisions; on the other hand, it is essential that their responsibility to their parliament and their people should not disappear. For, in the last resort, the people are at the mercy of their politicians, who can make decisions which in practice cannot be undone. A situation may be created by the high ministers which, even if subject to ratification, really involves unescapable liability for vast expenditures or even for war. It is true that public opinion should restrain itself, in exerting controls or checks on its high ministers; yet the controls and checks should always be there. It would be going too far to say that the statesmen and politicians who conduct the foreign affairs of a country are simply a danger to it;<sup>1</sup> they are certainly a danger to the country if they are left uncontrolled. As the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs reminded the House of Commons in a celebrated debate on July 11, 1935: "The War left the world with almost everyone acutely interested in foreign politics."<sup>2</sup> A freely expressed, and therefore in these days probably well-informed, public opinion is the most effective control of statemanship—a control which, after all, is only an aid to the statesmen in bearing their heavy responsibility.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. George Glasgow, in *The Contemporary Review*, June 1932, p. 777, and November, p. 622.

<sup>2</sup> *The Times*, July 12, 1935, p. 7.



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